

CELTIC MAGAZINE

No. XXI.—JULY, 1877.

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THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

No. XXI.

JULY 1877.

Vol. II.

HIGHLAND BATTLES AND HIGHLAND ARMS.

II.

KILLIECRANKIE.

HAVING, in the previous paper, given a simple account of this brilliant engagement, and shewn it to have been the result of the employment of superior arms—combined, certainly, with great bravery—the nonsense which has been written regarding it will now fall to be disensed.

The first absurdity seems to have been adopted more or less by every historian, which is, that Mackay's army was struck with dismay when they found that so great a commander as Dundee allowed them to march unmolested through a pass where they could so easily have been cut off, and that his doing so proved that he was confident of his power to defeat them in the open field.

This is certainly the first and only time in the history of British warfare that the soldiery have been credited with profound strategical reflexions; invariably on other occasions they have been considered as having bulldog courage, and confidence in their officers, but nothing more. Had the feeling indeed been ascribed to the officers, it might have been comprehended, but it seems difficult, without violating all other conceptions of the character of the British private soldier, to accept it. Donald Bane, in his account of the engagement, never hints at it, although he is so candid in the acknowledgment of his want of nerve on other occasions, that it is impossible to suppose that had he so felt he would not have expressed it.

The question, however, naturally occurs, Where had Dundee given such extraordinary previous proofs of great generalship? He had, indeed, distinguished himself as an active and energetic, possibly cruel, adversary of fugitive Covenanters lurking among hills and bogs, and led a successful charge of cavalry against an almost unresisting foe at Bothwell Bridge; but the only engagement in which he had previously held chief command was at Drumelg, where he was defeated by a group of peasantry, favoured by the nature of the ground; and even his bombastic eulogist, Mr Mark Napier, admits that General Dalziel, his superior in command, considered that he acted with unwarrantable rashness in hazarding an engagement in a situation so unfavourable to cavalry action, and never after had much confidence in him.

It is, no doubt, true that in the autumn preceeding the Battle of Killiecrankie he fully established his character for military ability by a

series of masterly manœuvres, by which he kept Mackay completely in check, and secured the north of Scotland from occupation by the Government forces; yet, as no engagement of the slightest consequence took place during the course of these manœuvres, whatever might have been their effect upon an experienced officer like Mackay, it is impossible to suppose that they could have made any impression on the common soldiery.

Granting, however, for the sake of argument, that his fame as a commander had made as great an impression upon the common soldiery of the day as that of Bonaparte upon the British in the Peninsular War, and it could scarcely be expected to do more, what did it amount to?—but that a great commander had committed a great mistake.

Every general who neglects to avail himself of an obvious advantage of position, commits a grave blunder, and in all recorded history, when such blunders are committed, they afford subject of congratulation to the antagonist, rather than inspire him with awe.

According to the theory of the Killiecrankie history, the English at Flodden ought to have been struck with great awe when the Scottish king allowed them to defile unmolested over the bridge across the Till, in place of battering it down in the middle of the march, which he might by all accounts have easily accomplished, and the epithet of an infatuated fool, and one 'reft of his wits, which has been so justly applied to James the Fourth for his conduct on that occasion, when applied to an imagined similar exploit of Dundee's, is altered into an eulogy of a profound strategical conception.

Mr Mark Napier, whose far-searching eye has penetrated into this, as well as many other millstones, has discovered that it was the result of Dundee's deliberate conviction that he was certain to gain a victory over Mackay in any event, but that if he destroyed him in the Pass, the victory would not have had a sufficiently great moral effect, or impressed the public with an adequate idea of Highland prowess.

This, like the preceding theory, attributes to the surroundings of Killiecrankie an effect which has never been ascribed to other warlike operations; for where, in the annals of history, has it ever been read that when a great military success has been achieved the public have ever concerned themselves with whether it was obtained in fighting without advantage of ground on either side, or whether one party did or did not skilfully avail himself of such natural advantages as rendered his antagonist nearly, if not altogether, helpless?

At this moment one of the great national ballads in Norway celebrates the fact of the Norwegian peasantry having surprised a regiment of Scots mercenaries in a pass, precisely similar to that of Killiecrankie, and annihilated them with their rifles without the possibility of the Scots making any resistance, as the nature of the ground prevented them from making any effectual reply to the fire of their adversaries, or closing with them, and it is only related of the Scots that they perished more Scotico while firmly and sternly pushing through the defile, without either attempting to break their ranks or surrendering to the enemy.

If any military exploit could be considered devoid of all glory, save of advantage being judiciously taken of the nature of the ground, this surely was one, and yet Norway rang with it for many a long year, and the ballad narrates—

How Norway triumphed in her might
O'er the mercenary Scot.

This may certainly be taken as an indication of what public feeling would have been had Dundee assailed and destroyed Mackay at the Pass of Killiecrankie, but it is scarcely in accordance with Mr Napier's theory.

The nature of the ground, and the awful spectacle of the rugged cliffs by which the Pass is surrounded, is alleged to have struck the greatest terror into Mackay's men, which just amounts to this, that Lowland soldiers are incapable of fighting in a wild and rugged country.

At all events, men of such sensitive nerves can never be much depended on as soldiers, in any circumstances, which can hardly be said of the British, and we never heard of its actually taking place, excepting in regard to the Hessians, who refused to march through this very Pass in 1745; but without the best authority, it is pure calumny to charge Mackay's army with any such feelings.

The real facts regarding Mackay's being permitted to pass through the defile unmolested are distinctly stated in the *Memoirs of Lochiel*, a work unknown to Brown, Chambers, and many other writers (it being then unprinted), and which is characteristically ignored by Mr Napier, whose sensational and transcendental theories it does not support.

According to the author of *Lochiel's Memoirs*, Dundee had been obliged to disperse his army, in order to enable them to obtain provisions, and give them the usual time which Highlanders always considered they were entitled to to attend to their domestic affairs.

On learning Mackay's intention to seize Blair Castle, he, with the utmost expedition, collected the forces which were in his vicinity, and marched with all possible despatch to cover that important position. In this he so far succeeded that he reached the Castle before Mackay, but was unable to occupy the Pass so as to prevent Mackay's marching through; and in this way, it may be observed, that each General gained a partial strategical success over his opponent, and sustained a partial defeat. Mackay had succeeded in penetrating the Pass unmolested, but found that Dundee had covered the Castle; while Dundee, although thus far successful, had been unable to interrupt Mackay's progress through the Pass.

Having penetrated the Pass, and learned that Dundee was covering Blair Castle, Mackay felt that it was in the power of his adversary either to accept or decline an engagement, and this he must have foreseen from the first moment he ever thought of penetrating through the Pass, for he could not be ignorant of the general nature of the country, which is such as to render it impossible to force an engagement with an unwilling adversary.

Dundee, who, as is explained in the *Memoirs of Lochiel*, hesitated till the last moment as to the propriety of risking battle, in order to retain the game in his own hands as long as possible, in place of meeting Mac-

kay directly in front, marched along very high ground on the right flank of his adversary, so as to render it impossible that Lowland forces—or, indeed, if the nature of the ground be considered, any troops whatever—could compel an engagement.

Mr Napier, whose talent for finding mares' nests in which to lodge his heroes is undeniable, has here found one of pre-eminent magnitude. Having, as already explained, discovered that Dundee was certain of victory, he represents him as proceeding to make assurance doubly sure, by taking his adversary in flank, and this, according to the profound military strategy developed in Mr Napier's mind, Dundee accomplished by directing his march towards Mackay's right, in place of meeting him in front, thereby taking him in flank, and thus, as Mr Napier emphasises by capitals, giving his adversary "checkmate"; and the proof of this is taken from Mackay's own Memoirs, who says that, seeing Dundee appear on the heights a long way from him, formed his line by a "quart de conversion to the right"—A "quart de conversion" being what is now termed a wheel, by which a line is formed to the right or left, in a direction perpendicular to its former position; therefore, if a body of men is marching in any column of divisions of either squadrons, companies, or sections, with the right or left in front, the line can be formed by a wheel either to the right or left. If the right be in front, and the divisions wheeled to the left, the line is formed precisely in its original relative position; but if the divisions be wheeled to the right, the line is equally formed, but the relative position of the divisions is inverted, and *vice versa* if the left be in front, but in any case, if the quart de conversion be made, the line is formed, and the column is not taken in flank. It is only when an assailing force makes its attack before the quart de conversion can be effected that the epithet of having been taken in flank can be applied.

It is perfectly true that an adversary marching upon the flank of a column may, without tactically taking it in flank, force it to form in line upon most disadvantageous ground, and thus obtain a great advantage of position in the subsequent front-to-front onset; but it appears that in the present instance no such advantage was gained, as Mackay admits that he drew up his line on very fair ground for receiving an attack, although it would have been difficult for him from thence to have assailed Dundee, whose great object to the last seems to have been to retain the option of declining battle.

It appears indeed, from Lochiel's Memoirs, that it was at the last determined to engage very much from the fact of its being known that Mackay was deficient both in cavalry and artillery, and it was thought that in this way the engagement would be reduced to a simple tactical contest between musket and bayonet, and broadsword and target, and the Highland chiefs believed that so great was the tactical superiority of their mode of fighting, that they had a better chance (not that they believed it a certainty, as Mr Napier holds) by fighting Mackay, who had so great a superiority of numbers, but unsupported by cavalry and artillery, than by waiting till their own reinforcements arrived, which would have reduced the inequality of their numbers, but given Mackay the chance of being reinforced by cavalry and artillery.

Mackay, who seems to have lived so long abroad that he, to a certain

extent, forgot the use of his native tongue, and employed many awkward and embarrassed phrases, mentions that after his troops had passed through the defile, and formed their line facing to the right, he observed that at a short distance in that direction there was a steep and rugged, but not very high, mountain (or rather, as Scotchmen would say, brae), while far beyond, Dundee and his troops were seen occupying much higher ground.

Fearful, however, of Dundee's at once marching down and seizing the crest of the brae, Mackay determined to occupy that position at once, and for this purpose he says he caused every man to march "by his face up the hill." This has been actually interpreted by saying that Mackay caused every man to defile past himself, and then find his way up the hill; but obscure as the phrase is, it obviously means that Mackay ordered his men to march up the hill in the line in which they were formed, in place of breaking up into sub-divisions and marching up the hill in columns, and then re-forming the line when they had reached the summit.

In this he appears to have acted with great judgment, for although breaking up of the line into columns would apparently have enabled the movement to be executed with more tactical precision, yet troops forming on strange ground, and not much accustomed to combined movements, are very apt to fall into confusion in the act of re-forming.

As will afterwards be explained, the defeat of the left wing of the Jacobites at Sheriffmuir seems to have been owing to their having marched to the field of battle in columns.

Mackay himself, in his Memoirs, considers that if he only had had efficient cavalry he would have been victorious; not considering that if he had been so supported, Dundee in all probability would not have risked an engagement.

Mackay, who was a man of undoubted piety, also makes some remarks upon the over-ruling power of Providence which gives the victory to whom He pleases; and the truth of such an observation must at once be admitted; but Providence almost invariably since the cessation of miracles, works by secondary causes, and it is to the investigation of these secondary causes that all scientific enquiries are directed. Who ever heard of the most pious engineer in existence if he found a machine not answering his expectations, contenting himself with ascribing the bad result to Providence, and proceeding to make another precisely similar, trusting that Providence would make it work more effectually.

The invariable course is for the engineer to examine his work minutely, and endeavour to ascertain where it is defective, either in principle or detail, and to apply the requisite remedies.

In this view, a few words from General Mackay's own pen are worth all the reflections and exaggerations which have ever been written on the subject, and they are these, that when Mackay encountered the Highlanders with such confidence, he admits that he was not acquainted *with their way of, or firmity (i.e., determination) in, fighting, and that his men were not well armed or trained to encounter such an adversary, and there lies the true secret of the Highland success.**

* It may here be observed that a single regiment of Mackay's army, composed of Englishmen, stood firm. According to the Highland account, this was because Dundee,

To work out the Highland system certainly required men of great courage and activity, and at Killiecrankie the Highlanders gave ample proof of both, although the late Dr Maerie, the son of Knox's biographer, has so far suffered his covenanting prejudices to overpower his judgment as to assert that Killiecrankie was not a battle at all, and that the Highlanders gained no military glory by their success on that field. It is simply pitiable to think of such contortion of judgment.

It is mentioned by Mackay in his Memoirs that a body of Highlanders, favourable to the Revolutionary interests, having joined his standard, the regular officers were desirous to increase their efficiency by disciplining them after the approved modern fashion, but Mackay had the good sense to interpose, and in the most peremptory manner, forbade any interference with the Highlanders' arms or mode of fighting.

Mackay further mentions that he having thought that one cause of the defeat of his forces was the fact of the bayonet being then thrust into the muzzle of the gun, whereby the soldier was prevented from continuing the fusillade till the last moment of closing, invented something like the present socket handle, so as to maintain the fire as long as possible.

In describing the bayonet as a weapon with which the soldier thrusts as with a pike, he forgets that the pike has the advantage of delivering its thrust at so great a distance as to prevent a sword from reaching the pikeman, whereas the long Highland broadsword can over-cut the bayonet with the utmost facility, and subsequent engagements proved that the new-fashioned bayonet had as little luck with the Highlanders as the old. The arm of the new-fashioned bayonet, besides, causes it to act at a great mechanical disadvantage.

Mackay, along with several other officers of distinction, perished at the Battle of Steenkirke, where the French Guards slung their muskets, drew their swords, and thus advancing against the English infantry (who apparently used their bayonets) succeeded in obtaining the only success which, in modern times, French infantry ever obtained over English in hand-to-hand combat.

It is said Mackay, mortally wounded, died in a ditch after lingering for some time. It may be that the thoughts of the gallant old expiring veteran turned to the wild hillside of Killiecrankie, when on a bright summer night the long broad claymores of the Highland savages flashed death and destruction among his bayoneteers, and he may possibly have thought that had such arms been in the hands of his stalwart Englishmen on that day, the British forces would not have been disgraced, and he might not have perished.

J. M. W. S.

in order to prevent his being outflanked, was obliged to leave an interval in his line so large as to prevent any of the Highlanders being opposed to them, and they actually repulsed by their fire a body of about 60 camp followers who attempted to attack them. Many different accounts of their prowess is given—Mackay, among other reasons, attributing it to the superior nerves of Englishmen, preferring, he says, the English commonality in matters of courage to the Scots, but from the account he gives of their retreat they seem to have been quite as panic struck as their neighbours. Had they really possessed nerve, they might at least have attempted to take their opponents in flank while rushing past them; but, at all events, it is perfectly clear that there was no collision with cold steel, although their conduct on this occasion has actually been quoted in recent times as a triumph of the bayonet.

HIGHLAND SUPERSTITION.

CHAPTER III.

It seems as if the Highlanders could not imagine their dead in an inactive state, or without interest in the affairs of either friends or foes. We know how "Colla Ciotach Mac Ghilleaspuig" asked as a dying favour, when about to be executed, that he might be buried so near Campbell of Dunstaffnage that they might be able to take a snuff out of each other's mulls in the grave. And among the traditions of Glencoe, it is told of one of its heroes—"Paul Mor Mor," or "Big Big Paul,"—that when dying he asked to be buried with his face to the Camerons, for that he never turned his back to them in life, and in the grave he wanted to show them he was still as fearless before them as ever. Paul was to be buried in the beautiful Isle of St Mun, where the Glencoe people are buried in the one side, whilst the Camerons of Callart and Nether-Lochaber are sleeping their last sleep on the side next their own shores. There is another story told of this "Paul Mor Mor," and though it is not directly illustrative of superstition, I will give it, as showing this warrior's ideas of religion. Upon one occasion, when going to battle, he was more than ordinarily anxious about the result, and so he made up his mind to pray to his Maker for victory, in doing which he made his requests known just as if he was talking to his chief. He told the Lord he had never troubled Him before, and if He would grant him this his first request, he would promise faithfully not to trouble Him again. Of course the prayer was for victory to his clan, and prowess to his own arm in the fight, and after exhausting his eloquence on this head, he begged at least that if He was not on their side, that He would be neutral, for he had heard He was not only a great King, but a mighty warrior, and that they on whose side He drew the sword must conquer. This idea of God, as a great and bountiful Chief of Chiefs, too magnanimous to take notice of small faults in His children, seemed a common one among the old Highlanders. I have heard of a gentleman in Skye who had the unfortunate weakness of too much love for the bottle, and when, after resolutions to break off the habit, a friend who saw him again under the influence of drink expostulated with him, he cried out indignantly, "Let me alone, it is not with a miserly scrub I have to do"—"Cha 'n ann ri sgrubaire a tha mo gnothuch." Another old man—in Skye also—had the habit of feeding his cows on the grass of his neighbours, whenever he could do so unseen; and one Sunday morning, when a heavy mist covered the land, he drove them early to the minister's park, determined to return them to his own grounds before the mist would rise. The minister, however, took a quiet morning walk, and came upon the old man and his cows unexpectedly. "Ah, did you not know if the mist hid you from me, it could not hide you from God?" exclaimed the minister. "And He is very different from you, He is greater than to make such a fuss about a bite of grass," replied the old man, as he drove his cows away to

his own poorer grazing, repeating indignantly, "Cha b' ionnan sin is thusa gu dearbh 's beag a shaoileadh Esan do ghreim feoir." But to return to the subject of superstition, and to the causes which were supposed sufficient to bring the dead to their former haunts.

It was generally believed that hidden treasure was often the cause of the dead's returning to earth, as if they could not rest until the secret hoard was possessed by some one. A highly respectable and intelligent Highlander told me the following story, to which he gave the fullest credence:—A man, by name Macgillivray, was ploughing one day in a field in some part of Perthshire, and as he stopped in the course of the day to rest himself and his horse, he sat on his plough, whilst his fellow worker lay down upon a cairn near them and fell asleep, with his hands under his head, and his mouth half open. By-and-bye, as Macgillivray sat watching, he noticed an insect, somewhat like a fly, coming out of the cairn and scrambling up the man's head. It got to his face, and at length entered his mouth. The sleeping man did not seem in the least disturbed, and at length, after a few minutes, the insect returned, and made its way back to the cairn, and the young man awoke, all unconscious of his visitor. "What a strange dream I have had," he said to Macgillivray, who begged of him to tell him what it was. "Some one seemed to whisper in my ear when I was sleeping," said the young man, "that this cairn was a hiding place for a large sum of gold." "I wish the dream was true, and that we had some of it," he added, laughing, as he returned to lead the horses again.

Macgillivray made light of the matter in his remarks to the young man, but he pondered it deeply in his heart, feeling convinced that the insect he had seen was the spirit of the person who had hidden the gold, and that the fact had been communicated to his companion when the creature was in his mouth. So upon the first opportunity he searched the cairn at early dawn, and found there treasure that enriched himself and his family, while the less acute man who dreamed about the matter got nothing. The trouble, however, that seemed to send the spirits of the dead to wander about in peculiar anger and unrest, was the disturbing of their graves, or especially the taking away the least particle of their bones. I remember being told in Harris of a young man who, at a funeral, picked a tooth from the earth of the open grave, with which he frightened a number of people at the "Ceilidh" that night. He had, however, to pass the graveyard on his return home late at night, and got such a fright that he was not seen to smile for a long time afterwards. There was also the case of the person in Uist who, in his greed to add to his land, dug up part of a burying place, and threw the bones he picked up into a pit by the sea side. From that moment he became a haunted man. Wherever he went after dusk a heavy step followed him, and clods and stones would be thrown at him, even sitting at his own fireside, and doors and windows closed; and though he even married a pious and excellent young woman, in hopes that her presence would drive this unholy thing from his home, it proved a vain hope, for even the innocent wife was tormented by the spectre, until at length, when about to become a mother, she fled from the haunted house to the home of her girlhood. The wrath of this

wandering spirit fell even upon the unborn child, for after the expectant mother had ironed all the little bits of clothing prepared for the child, she found to her consternation that they had been dipped in some black liquid, so she returned to her mother forthwith in great fear; and whilst there her husband was one night accosted by a tall military man, in a long grey great-coat, who told him that he was the one who caused him such misery, and that he could never rest until he restored his bones to the grave from which he took them.

The haunted man went without delay to the pit by the sea side where he had placed the bones, and restored them gladly to their old resting place. He became a changed man from that night, and his old greed and worldliness left him entirely, his wife and child returned to him, and they were never more disturbed by the presence of the old soldier.

At the time when I spent some months in Harris there was a great commotion among the people about a very decent man whose house was then haunted. About the same time every night a wild creature came to the door, and their dog commenced to bark, and almost tear the door open, whilst the terrified inmates of the house sat trembling. They got a godly man in the place to come and read the Bible and pray with them, but still the awful thing made its presence known as before, at the same hour of the night, and the master of the house, who had always been circumspect, wondered why he was afflicted so above his neighbours; and seeing that no spiritual power within their reach had strength to lay this devil, they concluded it must be some earthly and mortal thing, and they got some gamekeepers, with sixpences in their guns, to fire upon the creature through the door, for none of them felt brave enough to meet it, whatever it was, face to face. That night, however, the supposed thing of evil did not appear, which fact strengthened their suspicion that it was some witch in the form of an animal, for they had previously peeped through the door, and had seen that their troublesome visitor was in the shape of a beast, but a beast such as they had never seen. The excitement was dreadful far and near, and any one venturing out at night was not thought brave, but daring and impious.

Some days passed, when at length they discovered that the creature which had so frightened them was some wild animal that had escaped from the parks of Sir James Matheson, and had made its way to Harris; and being in hiding in some cave during the day, at night it used to come to this, the nearest house, looking out for food; and those who had been so frightened felt rather ashamed of themselves.

Not only did the Highlanders believe in the spirits of the dead appearing, but they also held that the ghosts of the living were occasionally seen. The technical term for these were "taiseal," and I have heard many instances given with the view to corroborate the fact of their being seen. There was a very striking case in Argyllshire about forty years ago. One Milloy, a farmer in Learg-na-huisean, Knapdale, had his house haunted for a long time. As soon as the shadows of night fell upon the face of land and sea, unearthly hands seemed to take delight in frightening and torturing the family in the farm-house, until at length, suspecting some human agency in the mischief, a proclamation was issued throughout

the country that any one found around the house after dusk would be fired upon.* On the next Sunday the noises went on in a terrible manner—stones and sticks were thrown at those sitting at the fireside, and all sorts of annoying things done. At length the son jumped up, took his gun, and rushed out, declaring that he would shoot whoever he found about the house. Afraid he would do mischief, his father followed him, and walking round the opposite end of the house, he came in the young man's sight at the back. The son, not knowing that his father had gone out, seeing this person, fired upon him and shot him dead; and from that moment all the noises about the house ceased, and all the country believed it was the "taiseal" of the old farmer that had been so long about the house. Opinions, however, differed about the cause for this—some saying the old man was thus punished for some evil done long ago, others declaring that Satan had made this "taiseal" do all the mischievous things that had been done in order that the son might become a parricide.

A clergyman of the Church of Scotland, who had large farms in Argyllshire, walked out in the gloaming, in a long avenue, and when near the end of it he saw a woman whom he had never seen before. He wondered if she was coming to him on any business, and so went forward to speak to her, when she suddenly disappeared from his sight. A few days afterwards a new grievance came to the farm, and the clergyman, to the end of his life, maintained that the grievance's wife was the very one he saw during his twilight walk—that the very dress and cap she wore were the same she was wont to wear, and as she was at a far distance from the place on that day, he maintained it was her "taiseal."

The dead seemed to keep up the old animosity to the foes of their clan, for an old lady of the Dunstaffnage family told me that once, when a Maclean was going to dine at the castle of Dunstaffnage, a stone fell from the house-top at his feet, thrown probably by some one of the Clan Campbell of long ago, who had cause to hate the Macleans. Also, that when one of the servants of the family married a woman of the Macleans, she never got rest or peace night or day, until at length she had to leave the place. The clothes she would have in lockfast places would be thrown during the night outside the house by unearthly hands, and though her clothes and her husband's were packed in one box together, her's would be taken out, and his left. My informant, however, was not quite decided whether it was the "beanshith" that followed the family of Dunstaffnage, and who would naturally have a dislike to their hereditary foes, who did this, or whether it was the dead who could not rest in their graves whilst a Maclean was eating the bread of the family.

The story of "Eoghann a chinn bhig," one of the chiefs of the Lochbuie house, is too well known to be given in detail here, though I may mention, for the sake of those who have not heard of him, that he had a very small souled and inhospitable wife, and on the night before a battle, it was revealed to him that if his wife gave him food unsought before he would start in the morning, he would return living, and if not, and that he was obliged to seek the food, it was to be a sure sign to him that he was to be slain. He arose early, and whilst buckling on his

* This is said to have been proclaimed three times in the Parish Church.

armour he cast many an anxious glance towards the bed whereon his wife lay pretending to be asleep. He gave many a hint, and at last he threw a shoe at her, but she did not move. "Cha dhuis brog no bruithin droch bhean tighe," he cried angrily. "If it is food you want," she said, "you will find curds in a dish there." "Your white curds will not come out at my side to-day," said the warrior, bounding away without breaking his fast. He fell in battle, and since then he has always wandered about on horseback, and the sounds of his horse's hoofs, or the crack of his whip, is sure to be heard by any one of the clan who has a death in his family; and it seems that he does not confine his peregrinations to the Highlands, for only a few years ago an old man told me that he heard the sounds in Glasgow two nights before he got tidings of the sudden death of one of his sons, who was a soldier, and died in the neighbourhood of London. But though a Highland ghost may thus visit the Lowlands—and one even was known to follow the haunted person to America—yet no Lowland ghost ever seems to be feared in the Highlands. Indeed, the existence of such a creature does not seem to be received at all; for I remember, when a girl, two Ballachulish men who were passing that feared and awfully haunted spot called "Duthag," which no one would pass, even in day light, without fear and trembling, when in the very worst part a squeaking, shrill voice said, "Soft night, gentlemen," the two quarriers took to their heels, and as soon as they recovered breath enough to speak, one of them said, "Dhia beannaich mi shaoil leam nach robh spiorad galld idir ann"—"God bless me, I thought there was no Lowland ghost at all."

MARY MACKELLAR.

THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE GAELIC SOCIETY OF INVERNESS will be held as usual on the Thursday evening of the Inverness Great Sheep and Wool Fair, which falls this year on the 12th of July. Professor Blackie, the Chief of the Society, will occupy the chair.

PRINCIPAL SHAIK OF ST ANDREWS, one of our most valued contributors, and whose poem, "The Clearing of the Glens," appeared in recent issues of the *Celtic Magazine*, has been elected, without opposition, to the Professorship of Poetry in the University of Oxford. Several eminent candidates were in the field, but Professor Shaik's qualifications for the Chair were felt to be so pre-eminent, that all the other candidates withdrew in his favour.

DEFENCE OF THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF THE GAELIC LANGUAGE.

BY THE LATE JOHN MACKENZIE OF "THE BEAUTIES OF GAELIC POETRY."

—o—

[CONTINUED.]

I MUST here tell the public, that although "Gathelus" has lately made so great a display of Gaelic lore, he is a mere jack-daw dressed in peacock feathers. Most of his objections against the rule of correspondents, and the orthography of Gaelic in general, may be found in Stewart's Elements of Gaelic Grammar. Some of his less objectionable innovations, too, are derived from the same source, "Gathelus" not only borrows the Doctor's ideas, but, in some instances, his very examples, the *ipsissima verba*. We are aware, that although this may detract from the pretensions of "Gathelus," it will not detract from the force of his arguments. He quotes the Doctor when it suits his purpose; we shall quote him, too, when it suits ours. After remarking that a learned correspondent had proposed to write the linguals *l*, *n*, *r*, double, when as initials they denote the same sound as they have at the end of a syllable, and when the sound is otherwise, to write them single, as *llamh* (hand), *llion* (fill), *mo lamh* (my hand), *llion mi* (I filled); the Doctor adds, "It is perhaps too late, however, to urge now even so slight an alteration as this in the orthography of the Gaelic, which ought rather to be held as fixed, beyond the reach of innovation, by the happy diffusion of the Gaelic Scriptures over the Highlands" (*vide* Elements of Gaelic Grammar, page 31).

There appears to me to be an inaccuracy in a rule of Dr Stewart's, at page 171 of his Grammar, where he says, "Proper names of the masculine gender are in the aspirated form, as *Brathair Dhonnail* (Donald's brother), &c., except when a final and initial lingual meet, as *Clann Domhail* (Donald's descendants), *Beinn Deirg* (Dargo's hill)." Now, there are actually a final and an initial lingual meeting in the very first example under the general rule, and yet contrary to the exception immediately following, we have *Dhonnail* in the aspirated form. I take it that this acute grammarian has been led into this inaccuracy by attending more to euphony, than to the relative meaning of the terms. The translators of the Bible have not always written in conformity with this exception. They write *Dan-Sholaimh*, *Clann Dhe*, Rom., viii. 16, and in Genesis, chap. xxxvi, we find *Clann Shobail*, *Clann Dhisain*, *Asal Shibeoin*. In the first chapter of Genesis, verse 2, we find *Spiorad De'*, and in Numbers, xxiv., 2, *Spiorad Dhe'*. I take it that the rule would be better wanting the exception. In the dialect to which I have been most accustomed, the aspirated form of masculine proper names is always used. We find *aros De'* and *uan De'*, but this is perhaps only the colloquial or cursory pronunciation, and ought not to be followed in writing. At any event, I have been taught to make a distinction betwixt *Clann-Domhnuil*, the patronymic, and *Clann Dhomhnuil* (Donald's children), better marked

than a mere hyphen. Surely no Highlander would say *leabhar Samuèil*, nor *clann Seumais*. *Clann-Domhnuill* is a compound substantive, conveying one complex idea, and to me the subjunctive term seems to be but an irregular form of the noun, as in Latin we have *pater-familias*. Although in parsing this compound noun we should call it the nominative, yet I do not insist that the subjunctive part of the noun is the nominative. I would also make a distinction between *Beinn Deirg** and *Beinn Dheirg*. The former, in my apprehension, denotes a hill named after Dargo, the latter, a hill (the property) of Dargo. I distinguish in the same way betwixt *eolas Dhe* and *eolas De'*—the former denoting the knowledge of God, or the attribute of knowledge possessed by the Deity; the latter signifying the knowledge we possess concerning God. If I am wrong here, I will bear correction. If the inaccuracy commented on be really an inaccuracy, it is but like a spot on the sun, and I noticed it merely to prevent my being knocked down by the club of "Gathelus," when the authority of Dr Stewart gives weight to it.

Were it only to save this one work of Dr Stewart's alone, which, for philological acumen, would do honour to any country, I would resist the innovations of "Gathelus," because they would render it obsolete. Whether good or bad, the orthography of Gaelic is now so closely interwoven with the dearest and purest and holiest associations in the minds of the simple Highlanders, that they would look upon any innovation upon it as an adulteration of the Fountain of Life, if not a prelude to the introduction of Popery; and even such of them as are above the reach of those fears, cannot but deprecate any attempt to mar the beauty and excellence of the present classic version of the Gaelic Scriptures, unless they are destitute of taste to relish its beauty, and of judgment to appreciate its excellence.

The variety of orthographies to be found in our dictionaries is ascribed to the rule of correspondents. We would rather ascribe it to the difference of dialects, the diversity of pronunciation, and the want of a standard. As long as the language continued to want a standard "to settle its orthography," everybody spelt and wrote his vocables the best way he could. In doing this, such as knew something of the "Philosophy of Languages," as well as the "philosophy of common sense," would pay some regard to derivation and etymology, while others, like "Gathelus," would care for nothing but "sound." Those different orthographies would, of course, be found in the books and manuscripts of the language, and unless the lexicographers rejected the orthography of their predecessors altogether, and invented a new system, we cannot see how, in compiling a dictionary, they could avoid noticing them. The different forms of the word *Bogsa* have been exhibited with great parade, but I assure you the lexicographers have not enumerated all its forms. In a large district of the Highlands it is pronounced as if written *Bùcùs*.

I must here defend the lexicographers. Suppose that I am a learner, and that in some Gaelic book, or manuscript, I find the word *Bocsa*, and that I am ignorant of its import. I consult my dictionary, but the word is not there. I, however, find *Bugsa*, but this appears to be a different

* Mons Atlas, Mons Atlantis,

word altogether, and the dictionary gives me no help whatever. Some friend tells me afterwards that *Boesa* is equivalent to *Bugsa*, it being another form of the same word, occasioned by a difference of dialect. Very well; might I not with reason condemn the lexicographers for noticing only one dialect, when they knew there were many? How difficult it is to please everybody. We had to learn, till now, that it is the business of a lexicographer to invent the orthography of his language!

If "Gathelus" should again complain that I do not touch upon the orthography of Gaelic, my explanation is, that I do not consider myself competent to amend it, that I consider him also incompetent, and that therefore, in the absence of a better advocate, I will defend it. If he persists in his vandalism, I trust that I shall be able to show that his innovations would do no good, but a great deal of mischief, to the language—that they are inexpedient, and futile, and destructive of every principle of etymology. Were I a Saxon, I have no doubt but I would join issue with him. They are Saxons, principally, that give any countenance to his measures, and it is wise in him, therefore, to direct his appeals to them. But seeing as I do, both the inexpediency and the futility of the innovations, however feeble my voice is, I shall lift it up in reprobation of his measures. Where, in the name of all consistency, is there room for complaint against the orthography of a language which children of six or seven years of age learn to read in the space of six or seven months? The only complainants are strangers, or such as preposterously imagine they ought to be able to read a language because they can speak it—although they have never studied it! "Gathelus" says I write too much to be consistent. That may be. I cannot, however, be more inconsistent than himself, and some others of the corps to which he is attached. One of those gentlemen tells us, in one of the reports of the Glasgow Auxiliary Gaelic School Society, "that to acquire the art of reading Gaelic to one who speaks it, is by no means so formidable a task as it is for one who speaks English to learn to read English." That there are several who knew not the alphabet three or four months before, who read the New Testament with ease and precision! Aye, and they instanced a Roman Catholic miracle at Stoney-bridge, in South Uist, where an old man who, though he knew not the alphabet when he entered the threshold of the school, still was able to read the New Testament with considerable fluency in twelve days! Now, this is the testimony of the reformers. A thing must be true when enemies give testimony in favour of it. Yet the very consistent witness who wrote the above says now that "the Gaelic language, in its present state, is as ill to learn as it would be to attempt to rear large crops of wheat on the summit of Ben Nevis." Another sprig of the same fraternity writes, that "we may as well expect to see steamboats plying on the tops of Arthur Seat and Campsie hills as that literature shall flourish in the Highlands under the present system." He says, besides, that he would allow the old Catholic at least twelve months. Really we think the time rather limited, if the account which "Gathelus" gives of himself be not "cunningly devised," in order to serve a purpose. "For my part," says he, "though I have studied the Gaelic with considerable attention for more than twelve years, yet I cannot boast of being able to read the Testament fluently." As great men

have the privilege of coining not only letters, but also syllables and words, "Gathelus" applies to me the elegant epithet *anserous*, from *anser*, a goose. Query, of the Caithness species? I have seen, of the same species with myself, whole flocks of goslings, some of them not exceeding seven, nay six, years of age, who could read the Gaelic Testament more fluently, and fully as correctly, as they could speak the language. And still "Gathelus," an assiduous student of twelve years application, cannot read the Testament fluently! Notwithstanding this admission, he sets himself up as a professor of Gaelic, and a most erudite grammarian, and treats with most supercilious contempt some of the best Gaelic scholars of the age! May we not address him, then, in his own improved orthography?—

Nach sserrv sso ri esslachg, na leuhudh, a *Ghateluss*?
 Ssiv dda vliabhna dhiag, er lliahudh 'sa seoil aggin,
 Soach ddug ssiv luiv a Ghalig, ha passddun* a ttogail leo!
 Bi aggiv calll, is nnaire, erson, ssiv vi co ddana,
 'S gun churr ssiv ssivhen, airdd, a varr er an "Tteachgara."
 Cidd an nni is danurr,† na baghara gun Ghalig,
 Vi ttegusg dhan' is ferr na e fenn ann e *spellligudh*?

Highlanders, I am sure, would require a key to the above lines. I am afraid that "Gathelus" himself will quarrel with the orthography. He will please to remember, however, that he accounts me but a goose, and that I have not as yet been twelve years in his school. I have, to the best of my ability, followed his prescription of using as few modifying vowels as possible—of substituting double consonants in their room, and also writing them in other places where the orthography required it. I have substituted *v* for *bh*, and inverted *v* (Λ) for *ao*. I have written the aspirated linguals *l* and *s* double, and murdered the etymology of the verbs, and what more could he desire? He will, of course, consider the hermaphrodite at the end a beauty.

We are told that "it would be desirable to have the Gaelic lying in state, with a more pleasing expression of countenance than distinguished it in life." This, at least, is contrary to the natural course of things. Death does change the countenance, certainly, but seldom for the better. It is certain that the agonies of death would not so much distort the features of the Gaelic as the orthography at present forced upon it. And if it be true that the Gaelic is already in a galloping consumption, should we not account it a useless waste of trouble and expense to put our most eminent mantua-makers and knights of the needle in requisition to fit out the corpse of our mother-tongue in a more fashionable attire than she ever wore in the days of her pride, when she stood before kings, and was "a mouth" to kings' councillors!

"Gathelus" may vaunt of his disinterestedness, and ascribe to others by *inuendo* motives, by which they are not actuated, but he would draw largely indeed upon our credulity if he requires us to believe that he cherishes a more enthusiastic regard for the Gaelic, and for those that speak it, than does the man whom he delights to dishonour. If "Gathelus" was truly the friend of Gaelic, he would love those who

* *Forsan, pasjun*

† *Auctore, Mr J. M.—.*

befriend Gaelic, and, instead of holding them forth to public scorn, he would throw the cloak of charity over their blemishes. We believe that the enthusiasm that could move an individual or two to compile a dictionary, and one of them to commence, and carry on with no ordinary spirit, a periodical work in a despised, disused, and almost dead language, shall neither be damped nor extinguished by the spittings of envy. And we have reason to believe that if ever Gaelic literature shall flourish in the Highlands, the memory of *Tormod Oj* shall not be forgotten; but that his name shall be pointed at as one of the stars that first shed a benign influence upon it, when the memory of some of his opponents (at least as Gaelic scholars) shall rot, and their new light be extinguished like the flickering flame of the will-o'-the-wisp.

A HIGHLANDER.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

SIR,—I send you a new line-for-line translation of “Conlaach ’us Guhona.” While endeavouring to make the verse run easy and readable, I have strictly preserved every important idea in the original. I have written *Guhona*, instead of Macpherson’s and Clerk’s *Cuhona*, as being more truly representative of the origin of the word. The substitution of C for G (and also for P), is a well known Celtic preference, which plays a most important part in Celtic Philology. In this fragmentary poem there is to be found as much internal evidence of the eldership of the Gaelic version over the English as should satisfy any fair-minded critic; else Macpherson was the veriest incarnation of imposture, and the most impudent and deliberate concocter of falsehood, that ever handled a pen. I am of opinion that the composition of the Gaelic from the English should be to Macpherson, or to any other, a far more difficult task than the prior composition of the English itself. The poem, it will be observed, bears some resemblance to the 28th Ode of the First Book of the Odes of Horace, where Archytas implores the passing sailor to sprinkle a handful of dust on his bones and unburied head:—

“At tu, nauta, vagae ne parce malignus arenae,
Ostibus et capiti inhumato,
Particulam dare.”

The crime of neglecting to do this was an unpardonable one, while the pious duty could be done with little trouble:—

. . . . "Precibus non linquar inultis,
 Ieque piacula nulla resolvent.
 Quamquam festinas, non est mora longa ; licebit,
 Injuncto ter pulvere, curras."

In the following poem Conloch, Toscar, and Ferguth, who seem to have fallen by mutual wounds—although that is not expressly stated in the poem—along with Guhona, who died of grief, visit Ossian in dreams, imploring him to send the "race of Selna" to do the last kindly office for them, and to raise their fame in song.

It contains many beautiful and striking passages, but is evidently unfinished and disjointed. The solemn and sombre character of the poem have induced me to adopt the common heroic couplet, and to avoid connecting a line in rhyme with another which contains a totally different idea. I have in two or three instances bracketed three lines under one rhyme. This is very common in Dryden. Any one who may undertake a new (and needed) translation of Ossian should remember how Gaelic poetry is read. We dwell on the vowels and glide quickly over the consonants, so that we read it with far more energy and vivacity than English poetry. I am inclined to think the following measure, which I have used in short extracts from "Fingal" and "Temora," is as suitable as any. As in "Fingal," Duan IV. :—

"Midst the brave of his army shone Fingal,
 As a flash that illumines the skies,
 While his heroes around him commingle,
 He spoke to his host in this wise :—
 'Come lift ye my banners on high !
 On the mountains of Lena careering,
 Like a flame from the hill-top to sky,
 Let them sound on the breezes of Erin.
 Great race of the turbulent rivers,
 That roar from their numberless vales,
 Come list me, invincible heroes !
 Thou Gaul ! in the fight who prevails,' " &c.

—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

ÆNEAS PAULUS.

CONLOCH AND GUHONA.

Ossian—Is it a living voice that Ossian hears ?
 Or spirit-summons from the other years ?
 The days of battle o'er my soul prevail,
 Like sun in even in the purple vale ;
 Again the clamours of the chase I hear,
 Again in thought I wield the deadly spear.
 I sure have heard a voice—what art thou high,
 That cometh dusky on the wings of night ?

The coward race sleep in their darksome pall,
 The wind is howling in their lightless hall.
 The shield of Fingal, with a hollow sound,
 Answers the breeze that whispers on the mound ;
 The bossy shield that hangs upon my walls,
 On which my hand in gentle fondness falls.
 I'm not deceived : My warrior friend I hear,
 Whose voice hath long been absent from mine ear.
 Why swift career upon thy cloudy car,
 Thou son of Morni ! strong in tide of war ?
 Dost know the chiefs, thy allies on the field ?
 Heroic Oscar, stout behind a shield,
 Oft stood the hero nigh thee on the heath,
 When spears were splintered in the tug of death.

Ghost of Conloch—Doth sleep on gentle Cona's eyelids fall,
 Amid the rustling of his windy hall ?
 And sleepeth Ossian of the mighty arm,
 When round his dwelling swells the furious storm ?
 No grave is seen upon the island lone,
 How long our deeds remain unsung, unknown ?
 High King of Selma of the echoing vale,
 How long our wraiths shall float upon the gale ?

Ossian—I do not see thee in thy dusky shroud,
 That sittest idly on the empty cloud.
 Art thou the mist that rolls from Lano's height,
 Or lurid lightning on the hill at night ?
 What airy mantle doth the hero wear ?
 Of what thy bow upon the ambient air ?
 Like shadow swift when skies are overcast,
 He sped away upon the fleetsome blast.
 Harp of the mighty ! let me touch thy strings,
 That knew the deeds of heroes and of kings ;
 Upon the mountain, lightsome be thy strain,
 Of I-hon belted by the swelling main,
 (Ah, let me see my faithful friends again).
 I see the heroes on the dark-blue Isle,
 With cloudlets floating o'er their heads the while ;
 The spray-washed cave of I-hon is in sight—
 The bending trees upon its mossy height ;
 Beside its mouth a running rillet raves,
 And Toscar bends him o'er the foaming waves,
 And dark-browed Ferguth stands in sorrow near,
 And far above Guhona sheds the tear.
 Is it but the wind that on the waters sweep ?
 Or do I hear them on their mountain-steep ?

Toscar—The night was wild with might of wind and rain,
 The heavy oaks were strewn upon the plain,

And darkly rolled the waters of the deep—
The bending billows roaring in their sweep.
In bright refulgence of a warrior's shield,
The livid lightning of the night revealed—
O, mighty Ferguth of the faultless form !—
The evil wraith that brewed the furious storm.
Silent he stood, and watched the surging seas,
His mantle rustling in the hollow breeze.
I could behold him weeping bitter tears,
All pale and haggard, and of many years ;
And thoughts of import rolling in his breast.

Ferguth—It is thy father risen from his rest ;
He seeth death impending on his race—
Such was his figure, such his pallid face,
Ere fell great Ronnan in the cloudy chase.
O Erin ! of green hills and balmy gales,
Full dear to me and pleasant are thy vales.
Thy mountain-streams in silence roll along,
Upon thy plains the sun is shining strong ;
Sweet is thy harp in Selma's lofty halls,
On Cromla's hills thy clear-voiced hunter calls.
We dwell in I-hon where the tempest raves,
In sorrow girt, with death-portending waves—
Foam-crested waves, that leap with awful glee,
Beyond the limits of the sober sea,
Dim mid the night. I shake with heavy fear,
And dread and horror pierce me as a spear.

Toscar—Ah ! whither has the soul of battle fled ?
O valiant Ferguth of the hoary head !
Oft have I seen, when deathful blows were rife,
Thine eyes aglow with gladness of the strife.
Ah ! whither has the soul of battle fled ?
Our sires were strangers to a coward dread.
Come view the waste of the extended main,
The winds are hushed to silence by the rain ;
The waves still tremble lest the sun may sleep,
Amid the tempests that command the deep.
The boundless limits of the main survey,
The morn is westward with a cloak of grey ;
Soon from the east his lamps shall blaze with light,
Full like a hero moving in his night.
I spread my sails with joy unto the breeze,
Where princely Conloch overlooks the seas :
An isle we coasted by the favouring wind,
Where fair Guhona chased the speckled hind.
I saw her shining like the morning rays,
That break in splendour through a cloudy haze,
Her raven locks, like tresses of the night,

Soft heaved, and fell upon her bosom white ;
 Forward she leant, and drew the willing string—
 Her arm behind her made a lovely ring,
 Like snow on Cromla which the winters fling.
 White-armed huntress of the desert isle,
 Come to my bosom, gather up a smile !
 She weeps her hours in sad and countless tears,
 Her thoughts on Conloch, first among his peers.
 Where is thy lover—where his place of rest ?
 Thou maid whose locks are heaving round thy breast

Guhona—A frowning cliff o'erhangs the foaming seas,
 The moss of age is on the hoary trees—
 Where breaking billows never find repose,
 And nigh at hand the sunny haunt of roes :
 There, there the towers of my lover rise ;
 The quivered daughters of the chase he spies,
 And looks upon them with disdainful eyes.
 "Where is Guhona ! Rumar's daughter, where ?"
 The maids are silent under gloomy care.
 My peace, my lover, dwells on Mora's strand—
 O thou who comest from a distant land !

Toscar—Return, Guhona, to thy lover's towers,
 Where skilful harps beguile the lightsome hours ;
 Thy lover, Conloch, is a friend to me,
 Within his halls I feasted once with glee.
 May gentle gales that blow from Erin's Isle,
 Waft thee to Mora and thy lover's smile ;
 There find sweet love, delightful to thy soul.
 But Toscar's days are darker as they roll—
 A lonely cave my aged form shall shield,
 Whence I shall look upon the sun a-field :
 A gentle breath is stirring in the trees—
 I hear the voice, upon the moaning breeze,
 Of fair Guhona, sad and ill at ease—
 The maiden's voice is distant from mine ear,
 In Conloch's halls, where reigns the festive cheer.

Guhona—What cloud is this that close around me gathers ?
 Within its skirts that bears my mighty fathers ?
 Their airy robes are subject to my ken,
 Like hoary mists that circle on the Ben.
 When, valiant father ! shall I yield my breath ?
 My soul is sorrowful and sad to death.
 Would that, my Conloch, once I saw thy face,
 Ere death shall fold me in his cold embrace.

Ossian—Thy lover, fair Guhona, comes to thee—
 He sweeps across the foamings of the sea,

His deathful spear seeks Toscar as a bride ;
 Black, bitter blood drips from his wounded side.
 Wan by the cave that bellows in the storm,
 Deject and sad, he shows his rueful form ;
 Come, fair Guhona, bring thy tears and sighs,
 The Chief of Mora waxes weak, and—dies.

Dim grows the vision, and forsakes my breast—
 The warrior-chiefs have hurried to their rest.
 But, O ye Minstrels ! of the present years,
 Raise Conloch's fame upon your harps with tears.
 In lust of manhood did the hero fall,
 And sorrow wed with darkness in his hall ;
 His mother looked, and saw the bloody shield,
 The mortal combat of her son revealed ;
 She knew her hero would return no more—
 Her wailful voice is heard on Mora's shore.
 Ah, pale Guhona ! dost thou find repose,
 Beside thy Conloch of the heavy blows ?
 Night courses upon day, and day on night,
 But no kind hand performs the funeral-rite ;
 The sea-fowls tremble at thy doleful cries,
 And showers of tears are falling from thine eyes ;
 Thy form !—a cloud that seeks the mountain's brow,
 Upheaving graceful from the lake below.

Soon from the east the race of Selma came,
 And found Guhona like a flickering flame :
 The tombs of all, in pitying kindness rear,
 And laid Guhona by her lover dear.
 Cease ! Conloch, cease ! nor rouse me from my rest,
 The Bards proclaim thee numbered with the blest ;
 Avoid my dwelling in thy dusky flight,
 That I may slumber with the shades of night.
 Leave me ! my friends—ye crowd upon my brain—
 Until my footsteps shall forsake the plain.
 With joy I shall rejoin you all again,
 When mossy age my feeble frame shall lay,
 In cold embraces of my house of clay.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—“ Highland Superstition—*Allan Duinn*,” by Mac Iain, unavoidably crushed out, but it will appear in No. XXII. “Destitution in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland,” No. IV., by the Rev. Alex. Macgregor, M.A., will be continued in our next. The series on “Highland Battles and Highland Arms” consists of four articles, the next two—III. and IV.—treating of Sheriffmuir and Culloden respectively.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

SIR,—As a small contribution in acknowledgment of the excellence of your Magazine, I beg to send you a translation into English verse of Duncan Ban Macintyre's "*Marbhrann air do chu a chaidh a bhathadh 'sa mhaigheach tarsuinn 'na bheul*," or Elegy on a dog that was drowned by falling into a pool as he was carrying back to his master a hare which he had just caught and killed. It is an interesting composition of its class, and not without much merit, though by no means equal to Macdonald's celebrated Elegy on his Pet Dove, an English version of which I recently sent to the *Scotsman*.

One very curious thing in connection with the frequent references to dogs which occur in the old Fingalian ballads, as well as in more modern Gaelic compositions, is this:—The shape, the speed, the strength, the endurance of the dog, are largely and enthusiastically dwelt upon. He can, unaided, kill the stag in his native wilds, and the nimble-footed roe buck in his birchen copse, and so far well; but when this is said, his merits are not yet half told. He can also catch and kill the hare; he is great with badger, otter, and fox, and when the wild boar abounded, he could attack and master him too. The hunting-dog of Gaelic song, in short, was a "Jack of all trades"—nothing came amiss to him. He seems to have been used in the pursuit of the commonest vermin, as well as in the chase of the lordly stag. The modern deer-hound is kept for deer alone, and, as a rule, is useless for any other purpose. It is said to be the lineal descendant of the old Fingalian hound of Scotland and Ireland; why should it have lost the many other accomplishments, besides stag-hunting, which, according to the ballads, characterised the old breed? A very interesting paper, for which I may some day find leisure, might be written on the natural history of the Ossianic poems, and the old heroic ballads.—I am, yours faithfully,

ALEX. STEWART.

NETHER-LOCHABER, May 1877.

ELEGY ON A DOG THAT WAS DROWNED.

FROM THE GAELIC OF DUNCAN BAN MACINTYRE.

As Patrick a-hunting did go,
 One day through the wide forest round,
 Adown by Glen Artney, where oft
 The big-antlered stag may be found.
 He slipped his good dog on the brae—
 His dog supple, eager and strong;
 Such a dog was ne'er seen since the day
 Of brave Bran of Fingalian song!

Such a dog was my dog—shaggy-coated and rough,
 Steel-sinewed, bold aspected, keen ;
 Built up to his form, tight and tough,
 In each contest the victor, I ween.
 The stag from the wilds he could bring,
 The roe-buck from out the green glade ;
 The forest was still his delight,
 Whence he never returned unrepaid.

Nor in stag's-chase alone was his fame,
 'Mid the wilds of the moorlands and rocks,
 Full well could he tackle the badger,
 The sharp-biting otter and fox !
 He held in his mouth the dead hare,
 As he slipped in the treacherous pool :
 My good dog was drowned—can you blame my despair,
 O ! night of my sorrow and dool !

A. S.

CAWDOR CASTLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CELTIC MAGAZINE.

SIR,—The Editor of the *Inverness Courier*, of May the 31st, in reviewing the *Celtic Magazine* for June, containing "Notes on Cawdor Castle," says :—"The writer of the Notes on Cawdor is in error, we suspect, in stating that Lord Lovat of the '45 was concealed in the roof of the Castle after the Battle of Culloden. On the day of the battle Lord Lovat was at Gortuleg, the residence of Mr Fraser, his factor, and he is not likely to have turned for safety towards Inverness, and the district occupied by the English forces. He most probably proceeded west, towards Loch Morar, where he was apprehended."

Dr Carruthers, in his "Highland Note Book," p. 157, says :—"The walls of the original fort, or tower, are nine feet in thickness. Below is the dungeon with its hawthorn tree, above it are two well-sized rooms, reached by a narrow winding staircase, and protected by an iron door, which grates gloomily and heavily on its hinges—a memento of departed times ; a third apartment, arched, is above the former, and a fourth, called the 'cape house,' is at the top. In the latter the grieve, or steward, used formerly to sleep, and when he wanted to assemble the people to work, he blew a horn from the leads of the Castle. *Lord Lovat, in his miserable wanderings and concealments after the Forty-five, stopped some time in a hole on the roof of this tower.*"

Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus,

—I am, Sir, yours truly,

TORQUIL.

THE LAST SCENES OF FLORA MACDONALD'S LIFE, WITH A VARIETY OF COLLATERAL INCIDENTS.

BY THE REV. ALEX. MACGREGOR, M.A.

—o—

[CONCLUDED.]

Unfortunately for Flora and her family, on their arrival in the New World, the American war was about its commencement, and young Kingsburgh soon became involved in its troubles. In 1775 Governor Martin determined to raise among the Scotch Highlanders a body of men to be sent to Boston, and mustered them into the Royal Highland Emigrant Regiment, the better to enable General Gage to look down all opposition in that quarter. Seeing the distinction and honour which all classes of Highlanders awarded to Flora and her husband, Kingsburgh, the crafty Governor resolved to invest him with the chief command, and, accordingly, granted him the commission of Brigadier-General, an honour which was a deep source of grief to Flora.

"In order to assemble the Scotch," says an American writer, "balls were given in different parts of the Settlement, some of which Flora attended, with her daughter, Mrs Major Macleod, and her younger daughter, Fanny. Upon these occasions, Anne and Fanny reigned supreme, and bore off the honours of the ball-room."

Early in January 1776, Allan Macdonald purchased a tract of land from Caleb Touchstone, on the borders of Richmond and Montgomery Counties, and named the place Killiegray. While at this residence, a severe typhus fever attacked the younger members of the family, by which two of Flora's children died, a boy and a girl, aged respectively 11 and 13. To add to the mother's grief, her husband was absent at his official duties, and was not permitted even to attend the funeral of his beloved children. The present owner of Killiegray is said to have fenced in the graves of these children, to preserve the spot sacred to the memory of Flora's offspring.

When the royal banner was unfurled at Cross Creek in 1776, and the loyalist army marched towards Brunswick, under the command of General Donald Macdonald, Allan Kingsburgh had his own duties allotted to him as Brigadier-General. Flora, with the due devotion of an affectionate wife, followed her husband for many days, and encamped one night with him in a dangerous place, on the brow of Haymount, near the Arsenal of the United States. Flora, for a time, would not listen to her husband's earnest entreaties that she should return home, as his own life was enough to be in jeopardy, should hers be spared. Next morning, however, when the army took up its line of march, midst banners streaming in the breeze, and martial music floating on the air, Flora deemed it high time to retrace her steps. She affectionately embraced her husband, and her eyes were dimmed with tears as she breathed to heaven a fervent prayer for his safe and speedy return to his family and home. But alas! she

never saw her husband again in America. Who can conceive the many anxious days and sleepless nights that the spirited Flora passed in these turbulent and bloody times? afraid that every messenger who arrived was a messenger to announce the death of her gallant husband. Still calm, peaceful, and resigned in her demeanour, yet the heart was sad. The revolutions around her were so rapid, the plots and intrigues of the enemy so various, that she could not resist the fear of danger to him on whom her happiness, in a strange land, depended. Each passing day placed her in a position where the mind hovered between hope and fear. Her prayers and aspirations were silently directed to that Merciful Being, in whose hands are the issues of peace and war, and in Him alone she placed her confidence and trust!

The defeat of the loyalist army, and the capture of her husband at Moore's Creek, struck a knell of woe to the heart of Flora. The officers were arrested and imprisoned, and Kingsburgh was committed to Halifax Jail. Flora had now but few of her family to comfort her. Her five sons were absent, and engaged in the service of their country. Her daughter Annie, Major Macleod's wife, was settled in a house of her own, and her daughter Fanny, still in precarious health, from the dregs of the fever, was too young to sympathise with a mother in deep distress. Such an accumulation of harrowing visitations could not help pressing severely upon the mind of this superior woman. After many and various difficulties with the scouts of the enemy, she resolved, on the recommendation of her imprisoned husband, to return, if possible, to her native country. She happened, at a social party of friends, to get into favour with Capt. Ingram, an American officer, who promised to do his best to forward her views. Some little time thereafter he furnished her with a passport to Fayetteville and Wilmington. Thence she made her way to Charleston, from which port she sailed, in 1779, to her native land, leaving her husband still a prisoner in Halifax jail. This step she took at the entreaty of her husband, whom she was not permitted to visit, and for the benefit of her daughter Fanny's health. In crossing the Atlantic, with none of her family but Fanny (for her five sons and son-in-law were actively engaged in the prevailing war), the gallant Flora met with the last of her adventures. The vessel in which she sailed was met by a French privateer, and a smart action took place. During the engagement Flora refused to take shelter below, but prominently appeared on deck, where, with her wonted magnanimity, she inspired the mariners with courage, and assured them of success. Unfortunately her left arm was broken in the conflict, and she was accustomed to say that she had fought for the House of Stuart and for the House of Hanover, but had been worsted each time!

Flora had seven children—five sons and two daughters—besides three who died. All her sons were officers who distinguished themselves in the service of their king and country. Charles, the eldest, was a captain in the Queen's Rangers, and was a very accomplished man. Alexander, the second son, was an officer in the naval service, and was lost at sea. Ranold, the third son, was a captain of marines, and of high professional character. James, the fourth son, served in the Tarlton British Legion, and was a brave officer. John, the fifth surviving son, was a lieutenant-

colonel, and had a numerous family. Flora's daughters, on the other hand, became the wives of officers. Anne, as has been said, was the wife of Major-General Alex. Macleod. Her second daughter, Fanny, was married to Lieutenant Donald Macdonald, of Cuiderach, in Skye. Of Flora's interesting family none is now alive.

After Flora's return from America to her native country, having been absent for about five years, she kept up a considerable correspondence with friends in different quarters of the kingdom. Two of her letters, written in 1780 and 1782, are preserved in the Jacobite Memoirs. These letters were penned whilst her husband was still in Halifax prison, and her sons still engaged in the service of their country. She was then about sixty years of age. The letters are valuable, as they show that she was an accomplished woman, an affectionate mother, and a devoted wife. They show further, that the source of her cheerful temper and serenity of mind was a steadfast, well-grounded faith in the goodness and mercy of that great Being whom she served, and was willing to trust in all the affairs of life.

The two letters alluded to were addressed to the lady of the late Sir Alexander Muir Mackenzie of Delvine, near Dunkeld. This lady paid great attention to Flora's son Alexander, when a boy, and who lived for nearly three years with the kind family at Delvine, where he was treated as if he had been one of their own children.

The letters were in the following terms :—

DUNVEGAN, SKYE, 24th July 1780.

DEAR MADAM,—I arrived at Inverness the third day after parting with you, in good health, and without any accidents, which I always dread. My young squire continued always very obliging and attentive to me. I staid at Inverness for three days. I had the good luck to meet with a female companion from that to Skye. I was the fourth day, with great difficulty, at Rasay, for my hands being so pained with the riding.

I have arrived here a few days ago with my young daughter, who promises to be a stout Highland "Caileag," quite overgrown of her age. Nanny and her family are well. Her husband was not sailed the last account she had from him.

I have the pleasure to inform you, upon my arrival here, that I had two letters from my husband, the latter dated 10th May. He was then in very good health, and informs me that my son Charles has got the command of a troop of horse in Lord Cathcart's regiment; but alas! I have heard nothing since I left you about my son Sandy, which, you may be sure, gives me great uneasiness. But I still hope for the best.

By public and private news, I hope we will soon have peace re-established, to our great satisfaction, which, as it's a thing long expected and wished for, will be for the utility of the whole nation—especially to poor me, that has my all engaged. Fond to hear news, and yet afraid to get it.

I wait here till a favourable opportunity for the Long Island shall offer itself. As I am upon all occasions under the greatest obligations to you, should you get a letter from my son Johnie sooner than I would get

one from him, you would very much oblige me by dropping me a few lines communicating to me the most material part of his letter.

I hope you and the ladies of your family will always accept of my kindest respects, and I ever am, with esteem,

Dear Madam, your affectionate, humble servant,

FLORA MACDONALD.

P.S.—Please direct to me, to Mrs Macdonald, late of Kingsborrow, South Uist, by Dunvegan.

To Mrs Mackenzie of Delvine, by Dunkeld.

MILTON, 3d July 1782.

DEAR MADAM,—I received your agreeable favour a fortnight ago, and I am happy to find that your health is not worse than when I left you. I return you my most sincere thanks for your being so mindful of me as to send me the agreeable news about Johnny's arrival, which relieved me of a great deal of distress, as that was the first accounts I had of him since he sailed. I think, poor man, he has been very lucky for getting into bread so soon after landing. I had a letter from John which, I suppose, came by the same conveyance with yours. I am told by others that it will be in his power now to show his talents, as being in the engineer department. He speaks feelingly of the advantages he got in his youth, and the good example show'd him, which I hope will keep him from doing anything that is either sinful or shameful.

I received a letter from Captain Macdonald, my husband, dated from Halifax, the 12th Nov. '82. He was then recovering his health, but had been very tender for some time before. My son, Charles, is captain in the British Legion, and James a lieutenant in the same. They are both in New York. Ranold is captain of Marines, and was with Rodney at the taking of St Eustatia. As for my son Sandy, who was amissing, I had accounts of his being carried to Lisbon, but nothing certain, which I look upon, on the whole, as a hearsay; but the kindness of Providence is still to be looked upon, as I have no reason to complain, as God has been pleased to spare his father and the rest. I am now at my brother's house, on my way to Sky, to attend my daughter, who is to ly-in in August. They are all in health at present. As for my health at present, it's tolerable, considering my anxious mind and distress of times.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to hear such good accounts of young Mr Mackenzie. No doubt he has a great debt to pay who represents his worthy and amiable uncle. I hope you will be so good as remember me to your female companions. I do not despair of the pleasure of seeing you once more, if peace was restored; and I am, dear Madam, with respect and esteem, your affectionate friend,

FLORA MACDONALD.

Eventually, after the peace was restored, Flora's husband was liberated from Halifax jail, and made as little delay as possible in returning to Skye, as captain under half-pay. On his arrival at Portree he was met by his affectionate wife, and a numerous party of friends, to welcome him. He made no delay in reaching the mansion of Kingsburgh, which, during

his absence in America, was left open for his return. For eight or nine years Flora and her husband lived comfortably and happily in their old residence, until both were removed by death, within less than two years of each other. On the 5th March 1790, the ever-memorable Flora departed this life. She died of a short illness, nearly two years before her husband. The gallant lady retained to the last that vivacity of character, and that amiableness of disposition, by which she was all her life-time distinguished.

Flora's death did not take place at her own residence at Kingsburgh, but at Peinduin, a friend's house on the sea coast, about three miles north of Kingsburgh. She went, in her usual health, to pay a friendly visit to the family at Peinduin, where she was taken suddenly ill with an inflammatory complaint, which yielded not to all the medical skill available at the time. She possessed all her mental faculties to the very last, and calmly departed in the presence of her husband and two daughters. Such, then, were the latter scenes of the personal history of this distinguished and noble-minded woman, and such her romantic adventures in assisting Prince Charles Edward to effect his escape. To read the accounts of her generous and devoted attachment to the lost cause of the last representative of Scotland's ancient kings, is more like the creation of fiction than a tale of sad reality. After all her adventures she now sleeps calmly by the side of him whom in life she honoured with her heart, and on whom, for about forty years, she had lavished all the wealth, and all the generous impulses of a truly noble and loving heart. And even still her character and virtues lead hundreds from all quarters of the kingdom to her lonely shrine, where they can silently muse upon her goodness, and emphatically realise the poet's estimate of woman :—

“Honoured be woman, she beams on our sight,
Graceful and fair, like a being of light,
She scatters around her, wherever she strays,
Roses of bliss on our thorn-covered ways—
Roses of Paradise sent from above,
To be gathered and twined in a garland of love.”

Flora's remains were shrouded in one of the sheets in which the Prince had slept at the mansion of Kingsburgh. With this sheet she never parted in all her travels. It was religiously and faithfully preserved by her in North Carolina, during the Revolutionary War. She had this relic in safe keeping even when her own person was in danger. At length the purpose which she intended by it was accomplished, when all that was mortal of the immortal Flora was wrapt in it by her sorrowful family. Her remains were conveyed under shade of night from Peinduin to Kingsburgh. The coffin was carried shoulder-high by a party of stalwart youths procured for the purpose. One of the party was old John Macdonald, who died at Edinburgh in 1835, in the house of his son, Donald Macdonald, pipe maker to the Highland Society of Scotland. Old John related to me very minutely the adventures of that night. The aged man's portrait was lately exhibited in the shop window of Cornelius Wilson, near the railway station here. He described the storm of that

night as dreadful! It was pitch-dark, except when the frequent flashes of lightning spread a momentary gleam over the scene. The thunder rolled with terrific peals, and the rain fell in crushing torrents. It would seem as if the ghosts and hobgoblins had left their dark abodes to take a "dander" abroad that night, and to lash up the elements into a perfect fury! At that time there were no roads and no bridges in Skye, which is now so well supplied with both. When the anxious party had arrived at the river of "Hinisdale," about half their journey, the stream was swollen to an enormous height, from bank to bank. The usual ford was impracticable, while higher up was, if possible, worse. Some proposed to return, while others objected, stating that she whose corpse they carried did never, when alive, flinch from any duty which she had undertaken, neither would they flinch from performing their last duties to her mortal remains. After due consultation, it was agreed to attempt crossing by the strand near the sea beach, which they fortunately effected in safety. Shortly thereafter they reached the mansion of Kingsburgh, where the body lay in state for nearly a week.

At length the funeral day arrived. The procession started at an early hour, as the distance between Kingsburgh and the place of burial was about sixteen miles. The body was interred in the churchyard of Kilmuir, in the north end of Skye, within a square piece of coarse wall, erected in 1776, to enclose the tombs of the Kingsburgh family. This spot is about a mile and a half from the rock called "Gailico," near Monkstadt, on which the Prince landed in Skye from the Long Island. The funeral cortege was immense—more than a mile in length—and consisting of several thousands of every rank and class in Skye and the adjacent isles. It is well known that Flora's marriage and funeral, between which there was an interval of forty years, were the most numerous attended of any of which there is any record, as having taken place in the Western Isles. Notwithstanding the vast assemblage present at the funeral, all were liberally supplied with every variety of refreshment. Of genuine "mountain dew" alone upwards of three hundred gallons were served out. About a dozen of pipers from the Macrimmon and Macarthur colleges in Skye, and from other quarters, simultaneously played the "Coronach," or the usual melancholy lament for departed greatness.

In reflecting on the career of this distinguished lady it must, no doubt, have been consonant with her own feelings to have spent her latter years, and breathed her last moments, in that romantic isle where she had found shelter for her wandering Prince, and where she had passed so many of her juvenile years, in the enjoyment of its sublime scenery.

The incidents in the life of this excellent woman are all exceedingly interesting, but are so numerous that they cannot be embraced in these papers. Enough, however, has been said to show that it is from characters such as hers that we have living examples of that self-denying heroism, in perils and privations, that shed a glory over the fidelity and devotedness of the female heart.

Tried even by the highest test of these noble virtues, the memory of Flora richly deserves to be kept fresh and green over the length and

breadth of the United Kingdom. It can hardly be credited that the dust of one so greatly distinguished should have been allowed to moulder for nearly half a century, without even a rude flag to mark out her last resting place. It is true that a thin marble slab, set in a freestone frame, was provided upwards of forty years ago, by her son, Colonel John Macdonald, at Exeter, but it was broken, or rather severely cracked, in landing it from a vessel on the sea-beach. It was set up in that fragile state beside her grave, but in a few months every fragment of it was carried away by tourists, anxious to have some relic of Flora. The inscription on the slab was as follows:—"In the family mausoleum at Kilmuir lie interred the remains of the following members of the Kingsburgh family, viz. :—Alexander Macdonald of Kingsburgh, his son Allan, his sons Charles and James, his son John, and two daughters; and of Flora Macdonald, who died in March 1790, aged 68—a name that will be mentioned in history, and, if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour. She was a woman of middle stature, soft features, gentle manners, and elegant presence." So wrote Johnson.

Such was the confused inscription upon the broken marble slab already alluded to. The composition of it does not forcibly indicate that the schoolmaster was then abroad. In 1834 Flora's grave was opened for the interment of her daughter Anne, Mrs Major-General Macleod, and even then, after the lapse of forty-four years, several of her bones were quite entire.

A few years ago a costly monument, with a variety of appropriate inscriptions, was prepared in Inverness for the tomb of our gallant heroine. It was in the form of an Iona cross—a beautiful, solid monolith of Aberdeen granite, twenty-eight feet high, and the design of Alexander Ross, Esq., architect, in this town. The cost was defrayed by public subscriptions, kindly received and cared for by the gentlemen connected with the *Inverness Courier*. The cross, which was of a ponderous weight, was safely conveyed by a steamer from Inverness to Skye, and erected on a suitable pedestal over Flora's grave. Most unfortunately, however, the party by whom it was erected in the churchyard of Kilmuir had not calculated on danger from the very exposed site of this beautiful piece of workmanship, executed by Mr Forsyth, late stone-cutter, of this town, and evidently had not sufficiently secured the monolith on its pedestal. A severe storm arose, which upset the monument and broke it in two pieces! Thus, the only real and substantial memorial reared in honour of this celebrated woman, has proved abortive; and what would have been a conspicuous object for centuries to come, has been ruined through the misapprehension of such as ought to have known better. But, be that as it may, it is fortunate that, should neither sculptural urn nor animated bust be at all reared to the memory of our heroine—that should neither polished granite nor smooth marble ever direct the traveller to her grassy bed, her own unflinching fidelity, and genuine natural virtues, will in all time to come secure for her a more durable monument than the perishable materials of time could possibly ever furnish.

The conduct of Flora Macdonald, alike gallant and romantic, has given rise to various poetical effusions, both in Gaelic and English. One

of the most pleasing of these is from the pen of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd. It is entitled "Flora Macdonald's Lament." The poem, although purely imaginary, immortalises our heroine's parting with the Prince at Portree, and causes her to breathe a strain of fervent patriotism in the following strain :—

Far over yon hills of the heather sae green,
And down by the corrie that slugs to the
sea,
The bonnie young Flora sat sighing her lane,
The dew on her plaid, and the tear in
her ee.
She looked at a boat in the breezes that
swung,
Away on the wave, like a bird of the
main,
And aye as it lessened she sighed and she
sung—
Farewell to the lad I shall ne'er see again !
Farewell to my hero, the gallant and young,
Farewell to the lad I shall ne'er see again !

The muircock that crows on the brow of
Ben Connel,
He kens of his bed in a sweet, mossy hame,
The eagle that soars o'er the cliffs of Clan-
Ranald,
Unawed and undaunted his eyrie can
claim.
The solan can sleep on the shelve of the
shore,
The cormorant roost on his rock of the
sea,

But ah ! there is one whose hard fate I de-
plore,
Nor house, ha', nor hame in his country
has he—
The conflict is past, and our name is no
more—
There's naught left but sorrow for Scot-
land and me !

The target is torn from the arm of the just,
The helmet is cleft on the brow of the
brave—
The claymore forever in darkness must
rust,
But red is the sword of the stranger and
slave,
The hoof of the horse and the foot of the
proud,
Have trod o'er the plumes on the bonnets
of blue ;
Why slept the red bolt in the breast of the
cloud,
While tyranny revell'd in blood o' the
true ?
Farewell to my hero, the gallant and good,
The crown of thy fathers is torn from thy
brow.

The unfortunate Prince, even under the depression of his latter days, never mentioned the name of his fair protectress but in terms of the highest respect and admiration. One of our most distinguished Scottish poets has beautifully described the supposed feelings of the Prince when reflecting, in after-life, upon the services of Flora Macdonald ; and his words are so pleasing that no apology is required for quoting them as a conclusion to this paper. Professor Aytoun, therefore, made the Prince to say :—

Backwards, backwards, let me wander,
To the noble Northern land ;
Let me feel the breezes blowing,
Fresh along the mountain side—
Let me see the purple heather,
Let me hear the thundering tide,
Be it hoarse as Corrievreckan,
Spouting when the storm is high—
Give me but one hour of Scotland,
Let me see it ere I die.
Oh ! my heart is sick and heavy,
Southern gales are not for me—
Though the glens are white with winter,
Place me there, and set me free.
Give me back my trusty comrades,
Give me back my Highland Maid—
Nowhere beats the heart so kindly,
As beneath the tartan plaid.
Flora ! when thou wert beside me,
In the wilds of far Kintail,
When the cavern gave us shelter,

From the blinding sleet and hail,
When we lurked within the thicket,
And beneath the waning moon,
Saw the sentry's bayonet glimmer,
Heard him chaunt his listless tune ;
When the howling storm o'ertook us—
Drifting down the island's lee—
And our crazy bark was whirling,
Like a nutshell on the sea ;
When the nights were dark and dreary,
And amidst the fern we lay,
Faint and foodless, sore with travel,
Waiting for the streaks of day—
When thou wert an angel to me,
Watching my exhausted sleep,
Never did'st thou hear me murmur—
Could'st thou see how now I weep,
Bitter tears and sobs of anguish,
Unavailing though they be—
Oh ! the brave ! the brave and noble,
That have died in vain for me !

ORAN MULAID.

KEY C. *Slow and Plaintive.*

{ :l	m :-l :l l :-s :l	d' :- :d' r' :-l :l	l :- :s s :-
Tha	mis - e fo mhul - ad san	am, cha'n ol - ar leam	dram le sunud;

{ :s	m : l :l l :-s :l	d' :- :r' m' :-r' :d'	t :- :l l :-
Tha	dur - ag air ghur 'na mo	chail, a dh'fhi - seaich do	chach mo ruin;

{ :m'	m' : f' :m' m' :-r' :d'	d' :- :d' r' :-r' :l	l :- :s s :-
Cha'n	thaic uì 'dol seach - ad air	sraid, an cail - in bu	tlaith - e suil,

{ :s	m : l :l l :-s :l	d' :- :r' m' :-r' :d'	t :- :l l :-
'Se	sin a leag m'aigneachd gu	lar, mur dhuilleach bho	bharr nan craobh.

A ghruagach is bach'liche cul, tha mise ga t iundran mor,
 Ma thagh thu deagh aite dhut fein, mo bheannachd gach re ga 'd' choir;
 Tha mise ri osnaich 'na d' dheigh, mar ghaisgeach an deis a leon;
 Na laidhe san araich gun fheum, 's nach teid anns an t-sreup ni's mo!

'S dh' fhag mi mar iudmhail air treud, mar fhear nach toir speis do mhnai,
 Do thuras thar chuan fo' bhreid, thug bras shileadh dheur o'm shuil—
 B'fhearr nach mothaichinn fein, do mhaise, do cheill, 's do chliu,
 No suairceas milis do bheil, as binne no seis gach ciuil.

Gach aom duin' a chluinneas mo chas, a chuir air mo nadur fiamh;—
 A cantain nach eil mi ach bard, 's nach cinnich leam dan is fiach—
 Mo sheanair ri paigheadh a mhail, 'as m'athair ri malaid riamh
 Chuireadh iad gearainn an crann, a's ghearain-sa rann ro' chiad.

'S fada tha m' aigne fo ghruaim, cha' mhosgail mo chluais ri ceol,
 'M breislich mar anrach a chuain, air bharraibh nan stuadh ri ceo.
 'S e iundran t-abbachd bhuam, a chaochail air snuadh mo neoil,
 Gun sugradh, gun mhire, gun uaill, gun chaitheamh, gun bhuaidh, gun treoir!

Cha duisgear leam ealaidh air aill', cha chuirear leam dan air doigh,
 Cha togar leam fonn air clar, cha chluinnear leam gair nan og,
 Cha dirich mi bealach nan ard, le suigear mar bha mi'n tos,
 Ach triallam a chadal gu brath, do thalla nam bard nach beo!

NOTE.—The above song, the composition of William Ross, the Gairloch Bard, is very popular among Highlanders. It is scarcely necessary to add that it is one of several composed by Ross on the same subject. I give the melody as it is sung in the north-west of Ross-shire.—W. M'K.

THE GAELIC SOCIETY OF LONDON.



Now that the Gaelic Society has arrived at that position when it can, with honour, celebrate its Centenary, it may be interesting to some of our readers to learn something of its origin and progress during the last hundred years. Its origin may be said to be coeval with that of the Highland Society of London, both having been originated by a band of patriotic Highland gentlemen who were then resident in London. These were twenty-five in number, nineteen of whom knew Gaelic as well as they knew English. Considering that they were first in the field in that movement which has now practically secured us Professors of the Celtic languages in Edinburgh and Oxford Universities, we shall, as a small acknowledgment, record their names for the admiration of Celtic posterity. They were—General Fraser, son of Simon, Lord Lovat, beheaded on Tower Hill after the '45; Campbell, yr. of Glenure; Donald Cameron, George Street, Mansion House; Duncan Stewart, Parliament Street; Charles Mackenzie, New Bond Street; Morrison, Temple; Macdonald, Panton Street; Dr Munro, Jermyn Street; Gunn Munro, Basinghall Street; Macdonald, New Inn; Macnab, Minories; Colin Mackenzie, jun., Bishopsgate Street; George Stewart, James Street, Golden Square; John Fraser of Achnagairn; Captain Macleod, of the *Munsfield*, India-man; Archibald Campbell, George Street, York Buildings; and John Mackenzie, of the Temple, who was appointed honorary secretary to the Society, and who was also one of the executors of James Macpherson, the translator of Ossian's Poems.

James Logan, author of the "Scottish Gael," and deputy secretary to the Highland Society of London from 1835 to 1838, in his preface to the Book List of the Gaelic Society, in 1840, states, that "the name of the first coterie was 'The Gaelic Society.' This Society rapidly increased in numbers and respectability. One of their first acts was to obtain the repeal, in 1782, of the repugnant law which made it felony for a Highlander to wear his native dress." The meetings of the Society were held in the "Spring Garden Coffee-house," Charing Cross.

On the termination of the American War of Independence, a large number of Scottish officers returned to London. The Gaelic Society determined to show their appreciation of the bravery displayed by their fellow countrymen during the war, and invited them to a grand dinner, at which the Hon. General Simon Fraser presided over a large and dis-

tinguished gathering of Highland gentlemen. Some one proposed that they should join the Society as members, and a very large number of them did so. At the first general meeting held after this large and influential acquisition to the Society, in May 1782, the number of southern members who did not understand Gaelic were found to be so numerous that a proposition to change the name of the Society, and give it a more national designation, was adopted. That of "The Highland Society of London" was most in favour, and was finally decided upon. During the next five years no less than five hundred of the first rank and talent of the country, including peers, judges, generals, and admirals, and the other aristocratic ranks, became members of the new Association, and ultimately, the Duke of Sussex became its President for three years—1806-1808. Amidst this galaxy of distinguished men the Gaelic language, originally the language of the Society, was naturally pushed aside, and became "small and still." Thus the title of "Gaelic Society" disappeared, and was not again heard of until 1808, when the Rev. Duncan Robertson, and Mr Donald Currie resuscitated the "Gaelic Society," which continued to meet under that designation until 1816, when it was again overwhelmed by the good intentions of the members allowing visitors, other than Gaelic-speaking men, to come amongst them. It was proposed and carried that gentlemen from *any* part of Scotland should be admitted members; but even then the Gaelic language was the language of the President up to nine o'clock. But after that the "vulgar tongue" was allowed sway, until, on a certain occasion, five of the Gaelic-speaking members proposed to alter the designation to that of "The Club of True Highlanders."

The minority, who opposed the change, anxious to keep up the old custom of conducting their proceedings in their native Gaelic, soon succeeded in re-establishing the Society under the classic name of "The Sons of Morven." Some members of the Highland Society joined the "Sons," notably General Stewart of Garth, General Sir Allan Cameron of Erracht (79th Cameron Highlanders), and General John Macdonald of Dalchoisnie. Among others are found the names of Donald Mackinnon, M.D., Murdo Young, an Invernessian, and subsequently proprietor of the *Sun* newspaper, Dr Andrew Robertson, and other influential gentlemen. As would naturally be expected of a Society with such a classic designation, this coterie pursued a course of a more decided literary nature than its predecessors or contemporaries, subjects of Celtic and Highland interest being regularly debated, while prizes were given and awarded amongst the members for the best essays on Celtic subjects. The hotel in which they met, in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, was burnt down,

when, most unfortunately, their minutes, with a valuable collection of books and MS. translations, were destroyed. This catastrophe, and the departure from London of several members, caused for a time the suspension of regular meetings of the patriotic Society. A remnant of the "Sons," however, kept it from extinction, among whom were—William Menzies, musical manager to Nathaniel Gow; Lewis Macdougall, Donald Currie, and Alexander Mackintosh; and to these four gentlemen we are indebted for the re-institution, in 1830, of the present Gaelic Society of London. Among the most prominent members at this period we find—Alex. Ross, A.M., author of several interesting Gaelic publications; Gilbert Gibson, author of an etymological work; David Murphy, author of an Irish-English Dictionary; Patrick O'Keefe, translator of Irish records; D. Macdonald, author of several Gaelic poems; James Logan, author of the "Scottish Gael;" Robert Ranald MacIain, the painter of "The Highland Clans;" the Rev. John Lees, Henry Fall, William Munro, a pretty extensive contributor to Gaelic publications; D. Macpherson, bookseller, and author of a popular and excellent English translation of "Mairi Laghach," and last, but not least, the venerable Colin Maccallum, who is still alive, hale and hearty. He joined the Society in 1832, was President for several years, is now its oldest, and one of its best living members, and long may he continue so.

For fifteen years they met in the British Coffee-house, Cockspur Street. The main objects stated in the constitution of the Society, which is before us, in the beautiful handwriting of the late James Logan, in his better days, is "The Cultivation of the Language, of the Music, and of the Literature of the Highlands"—and these were well understood by President Menzies, who was a first-rate musician, an excellent philologist, and of considerable literary culture. In 1840 the Society had accumulated upwards of two hundred and sixty volumes of books on various subjects and in several languages. Forty-five essays had been read. Besides these, the library contains an unique collection of tracts and pamphlets on the state of feeling during the disturbances of 1715 and '45. The Library also contains copy of a petition prepared by the Society, and presented to the House of Commons, *as early as the year 1835, in favour of establishing a Professor of the Celtic Languages in the University of ABERDEEN.* The Society presented another petition, in 1839, for the same object, but withdrawing the selection of Aberdeen. This petition was taken charge of by Mr Campbell of Islay, then M.P. for Argyllshire; W. A. Mackinnon, M.P. for Rye; Sir George Sinclair, M.P. for Caithness; Sir George Murray; Donald Maclean, M.P. for the University of Oxford; and others. On its presentation, Mr Spring Rice, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, took exception to its acceptance, on the ground that "petitions for grants of money were inadmissible." On the following afternoon, however, Mr Campbell of Islay obtained the permission of the Chancellor to receive a deputation from the petitioners on the subject of their rejected petition; and James Stewart, Albemarle Street; William Menzies, Golden Square; and John Cameron MacPhee, the present President of the Society, were appointed, and waited on Mr Rice, who listened with commendable patience while each of these gentlemen made their observations on the

want, in any of our Universities, of a teacher of a language which was used in religious and social life by nearly a fourth part of the whole population of Scotland. He was struck with and expressed his astonishment when informed that the clergymen of Highland parishes had no training in the language in which they expounded the Scriptures to their people, beyond what they picked up from reading, or in general conversation. He then said, addressing Mr Campbell of Islay—"I am so far convinced, that I will recommend the Lords of the Treasury to put down a sovereign for every sovereign you can collect among your own countrymen, as an earnest of their desire for the establishment of a Celtic Chair." The deputation did not consider the proposal unreasonable, but they found themselves unequal to the task of raising a fund among their countrymen at that time, and further efforts were, for a time, given up. The Gaelic Society, however, never lost sight of the subject, and it may be safely asserted that had other Scottish societies exerted themselves with equal public spirit and industry, a Celtic Chair would, long ere this, have been established, at least in the capital of our country. In 1840 the Earl of Aboyne became patron of the Society, and took lessons in Gaelic from D. Macpherson, one of the members, and Gaelic secretary.

Nothing of special interest engaged the attention of the Society during the next seven years, except the alienation of the Gaelic Chapel Fund from its purpose, which we shall afterwards notice, till, in 1847, they took steps, on the suggestion of Alexander Mackintosh, now resident in Canada, to collect subscriptions to alleviate the condition of their countrymen, brought about by the potato famine in the Highlands and Western Islands of Scotland. The same member proposed that a ball should be held in Willis' Rooms. This was done, with the unexpected result of producing £500 after paying all expenses. Captain Lamont, R.N., was treasurer for this fund, while John Cameron Macphee acted as honorary secretary; and to avoid any suspicion of partiality in dispensing aid to the distressed, the money was handed to the Secretary of the Treasury, Sir Charles Trevelyan, for distribution among the most necessitous districts. It was finally, after consultation with the Society, distributed as follows:—The Isle of Skye, £150; other Hebridean Islands, £150; Mull, £80; Ardgour and Lochaber, £100; and Caithness, £20.

The Scottish fetes proposed (1848) by Mr John Boucher, Sergeant's Inn, secretary to the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and at which the Queen, Prince Consort, and suite, as also the leading members of the aristocracy, attended each day, was supported by the Gaelic Society of London. Its representatives on the Committee of Management, William Menzies and John Cameron MacPhee, were appointed judges of the competitions. It was on the proposition of the latter that the Chamber Music of Scotland was represented by ten violin players, and, to secure their attendance, he prevailed upon the committee to allow them £5 each for travelling expenses.

During the next fifteen years we find nothing remarkable to record in the history of the Society; but in 1866, several enthusiastic Celts joined its ranks, many of whom, we are glad to find, still continue to be ardent supporters of our parent Gaelic Society. A new impetus had now been

given to its proceedings, and to the active measures adopted may be ascribed, as will be seen in the sequel, the present position of our native Gaelic in the estimation of cultivated men at home and abroad. In 1867 Mr Colin Chisholm was elected President, with Mr Donald Macgregor as Vice-President, and two years afterwards steps were taken in a direction which will be deservedly remembered with gratitude by future generations of our Highland countrymen, and shed additional lustre on the memory of those patriotic gentlemen who so efficiently, but unostentatiously, took such an active part in this excellent work.

The first annual supper of the Society was held on the 12th January 1869*, when letters were read from Professor Blackie, Dr Maclauchlan, and the Rev. William Ross, of Rothesay, strongly advocating a movement in favour of a Celtic Professorship. The President, Mr Colin Chisholm, in an able and powerful speech, proposed "Success to Gaelic Literature, and to the movement for instituting Professors in that ancient language." Mr Donald Macgregor, Vice-President, also supported the proposal, and concluded an eloquent speech as follows:—

"If the Gaelic died out, with it would disappear the characteristics of the Celtic nation, and a vast store-house of traditionary lore, untranslated and unknown to the world; and posterity would ever regret the extinction of this hoary sister of the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Latin—this ancient and expressive garniture, so rich and so graphic in its embodiment of either ideality or reality—a language so important to philologists and men of learning. They, therefore, a little band, like the Spartans of olden time, although for a different, yet not less worthy object, had resolved to fight this battle for a cause that had indisputable claims, not only upon the Gaelic-speaking community, but on every true son of Scotland. He hoped the country at large would support them in this commendable effort. Let them to a man form themselves into a patriotic Scoto-Celtic phalanx, invulnerable against whatsoever may retard their progress in the execution of this duty. They would have to dispel all prejudice, combat every opposition, and storm each difficulty, so as to plant their Gaelic standard inside the redoubts of the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen."

The writer has elsewhere† given an account of the Society's subsequent proceedings in the following terms:—

"The Gaelic Society (of London) never lost sight of the Celtic Professorship, and in 1869, at one of their monthly meetings, the subject was brought forward, when a committee was nominated to investigate what had been done, and could be done, to awaken the nation for the removal of this stigma on the language of so considerable a portion of the population of Scotland. A proposition was submitted by Mr P. H. Cameron, then English secretary for the Society, and now "S.S.C." in Edinburgh, to address circulars to all the ministers of Highland parishes, and of other denominations throughout the Highlands, asking their views on the desirability of establishing a Celtic Professorship

* See *London Scotsman* of January 16, 1869.

† Introduction to the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vols. iii. and iv.

in one of the Scottish Universities, and to what extent Gaelic was preached in their respective parishes. The Society adopted the proposal, and the propriety of the steps taken was approved by the Rev. Dr Maclauchlan, in a letter dated 'Edinburgh, 17th January 1870.' The circulars, dated 10th December 1869, with forms of reply, were prepared and despatched (prepaid there and back). The first reply was from the Free Church Manse of Campbelltown, dated 11th January 1870, and signed 'John L. Maclean.' It is important to take particular notice of the dates, to show what progress the Gaelic Society had made before the Council of the University of Edinburgh took any steps in the matter. The circulars were returned in most cases, with detailed information, and the result showed that out of 3395 places of worship of all denominations in Scotland, 461 had Gaelic services once a-day in the following proportions :—Established Church, 235; Free Church, 166; Catholic Chapels, 36; Baptists, 12; Episcopalians, 9; Congregationalists, 3.

"At a general meeting of the Society, held on the third Tuesday of January 1870, further steps were taken to agitate the removal of this flagrant indifference exhibited towards the cherished language of our Highland countrymen. Aware that some of the objects for which the Highland Society of London was instituted were the 'preservation of the Gaelic language,' and 'to establish a Professor of Gaelic in one or more of the Universities of Scotland,' one of the first proposals made at this meeting was to instruct the secretaries 'to draw the attention of the Court of Directors of the Highland Society to the desirability of instituting the Professorship for Gaelic, and suggesting a joint committee of the two Societies (the Highland and the Gaelic) to co-operate for the accomplishment *now* of this too long deferred act of justice to the language.' To this communication Sir Patrick Colquhoun, the hon. secretary, replied under date 3d April 1870 :—

'Dear Sirs,—There being no quorum of the Highland Society (the 8th March), the consideration of the Gaelic Professorship question was postponed. This need not, however, prevent you proceeding *independently* of the Highland Society.'

"This unsatisfactory reply was not calculated to cheer the smaller, but far more patriotic, Society, nor was it likely to inspire confidence in the sincerity of ultimate co-operation. At a future meeting it was decided to institute systematic proceedings in the press, and through other public channels, to aid the attainment of this, one of the articles of faith of the Gaelic Society. A consultation at this juncture with the editor of the *London Scotsman*, resulted in the determination to make arrangements to get together such gentlemen as could be influenced, and thus ventilate the subject through members of the London daily press. Three articles on the subject appeared soon after in the *London Scotsman*, from the pen of Professor Blackie. Some time afterwards the following circular, dated 3d May 1870, was received by the Society from Professor Macgregor :—

'Extract from the minutes of meeting of the General Council of the University of Edinburgh, of date 19th April 1870 :—The Council re-

mitted to the following committee to report on the question of establishing a Chair of Celtic Literature.

(Signed) THOMAS GILBERT,
Secretary of General Council.'

"The Gaelic Society supplied the committee, told off by the University Council, with their tabulated statement, and all the other valuable information in their possession."

The steps taken by the Council of the University of Edinburgh during the next few years are already well known, and this is not the proper connection to make any detailed reference to them. In 1874 Professor Blackie inaugurated his crusade at a meeting of the sister Society of Inverness, and in 1875 he found his way to London, when the London Society offered him their hearty co-operation, and entertained him at a public luncheon, under the presidency of that enthusiastic Highland nobleman, the Marquis of Huntly, at which over a hundred gentlemen belonging to the learned professions attended, and not only advocated the original proposal to institute a Chair of the Celtic Languages in the University of Edinburgh, but also in those of Oxford and Dublin. To show their real earnestness in the cause, the Society collected the sum of £250 for the Celtic Chair Fund. In 1871 a deputation from the Society waited upon Lord Advocate Young, requesting him to make provision, in the Education Act for Scotland, for teaching Gaelic in Highland schools. The views of the Society were forcibly urged by Messrs Colin Chisholm, Tolmie, Sutherland, and Forbes. In the same year steps were taken for the restitution of the Gaelic Chapel Fund, originally subscribed to make provision for Gaelic preaching in the Metropolis. This had been regularly provided until, at the Disruption in 1843, the Rev. Mr Lees, who conducted the Gaelic services, was called to a church in Scotland, and left the London Celts without a Gaelic minister. A proposal was made at the time to form the fund into a nucleus for the establishment in Scotland of a Professorship of the Gaelic language, but the following members of the Gaelic Society, who were also members of the Gaelic congregation, and who supported the proposal, found themselves in the defeated minority, viz. —James Stewart, D. Macpherson, W. Menzies, D. Wilkinson, A. Mackintosh, John Cameron MacPhee, and his brother Ewan. The Directors of the Caledonian Asylum, having discovered that such a fund existed, without the knowledge of any member of the Gaelic Society, or of the Gaelic congregation, applied successfully to the Court of Chancery to have the money transferred for the use of their institution. The Gaelic Society had always considered this transaction everything but fair and above board, but they were at the time, from want of funds, unable to oppose the misapplication of the Fund, which amounted to about £4000. Amicable means were found unavailable, and after obtaining a favourable opinion from eminent counsel, a meeting, held in the month of December 1871, decided upon appealing to the Court of Chancery for the restitution of the Fund to its original object. On the 8th of March Vice-Chancellor Malins gave judgment declining to interfere, thus mulcting the friends of Gaelic in £100 of law expenses. We find, from a report of the case in the *Times*, that Colin Maccallum, Donald Macgregor, and John

Cameron MacPhee, three prominent members of the Gaelic Society, were the petitioners,

The next subject of importance which we find the Society taking up is the preparation of the Collection of "Gaelic Melodies" recently issued by them. In this undertaking these Gaelic patriots were imbued with the same public spirit which had hitherto impelled them in their noble work; but we regret to find their success in this field failing to secure what could hardly be expected, and what, perhaps, was impossible, the same unanimous approval which their previous actions in the good cause had received from their brother Highlanders. Making no pretence to a critical knowledge of music, we have hitherto refrained from expressing any opinion on the work, and shall not, at this late period, express any regarding its merits, favourable or otherwise. It has, however, produced one important result, for had it not been for the Highland melodies, we question if the Celtic Choir, numbering about a hundred members, under the leadership of a Professor of the Royal Academy of Music, formed under the auspices of the Gaelic Society, "for the study and preservation of the songs and melodies of the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland," had ever been brought into existence, to say nothing of the many imitators which are now found in the field, striving who can do most to preserve the songs and the music of the Scottish Highlands.

On more than one occasion the members of the Gaelic Society have been in request as Gaelic interpreters in the House of Lords. The present President, John Cameron MacPhee, acted in this capacity in the famous Breadalbane peerage case, while the late President, Colin Chisholm, did the same duty, as well as decipher ancient Gaelic mss., in the Mar case. A Society with such a history can well afford to celebrate, and well deserves the effective celebration which we have recently attended, and of which a full report appears below.

A. M.

CENTENARY DINNER.

—o—

THE Centenary of the Gaelic Society of London was celebrated on Wednesday evening, 6th June, by a banquet in St James's Hall, Regent Street, London. There was a large and influential attendance. The Right Hon. the Marquis of Huntly, chief of the Society, occupied the chair; and Mr J. Cameron MacPhee, the President of the Society, discharged the duties of the vice-chair. Among the gentlemen present were—J. F. Campbell of Islay, Jesse Grant (son of ex-President Grant, United States), James Cowan, M.P., C. Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P., Surgeon-General W. A. Mackinnon, C.B., A. H. Gordon, Ewen Macdonell of Keppoch, Dr Charles Mackay, R. W. Johnston, Dr Farquhar Matheson, Robert Hepburn, David Hepburn, Captain Jay, W. A. Crouch, J. Macnab, Dr D. S. Macdonald, Andrew Maclure, jun., John R. Macdonald, Macrae Moir, George Grant, John Taylor, W. H. Burton (Vice-President), John Forbes (Secretary), A. Mackenzie Mackay (Treasurer), Donald Campbell (Gaelic Secretary), Donald Kennedy

(Librarian), George Mackellar, Donald Grant, T. L. Corbett, Charles Robertson, David Laing, S. Booth, — Chapman, James Macdonald, Donald Macgregor, ex-Vice-President, A. Mackenzie (*Celtic Magazine*), Thos. Wilson Reid (*London Scottish Journal*), Robertson Rogers, Dr Martin, R.N., — Mackean, W. Peyton, William MacPhee, Ewen MacPhee, A. Macgillivray, James Irvine, James Habler, Edwin Hooke, Herr Louis Honig, &c.

Letters of apology were received from General Grant, ex-President of the United States; the Right Hon. the Earl of Dunmore, Viscount Macduff, M.P., Viscount Reidhaven, Cluny Macpherson of Cluny, W. Cunliffe Brooks, M.P., Sir Kenneth S. Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch, Right Hon. Lyon Playfair, M.P., Professor Blackie, Professor Henry Morley, Professor Geddes, Rev. J. Oswald Dykes, D.D., Peter MacLagan, M.P., Dr Cameron, M.P., Hon. Arthur Kinnaid, M.P., Donald Matheson, John Mackay, C.E., Swansea, Colonel John Macneill, V.C., Dr Erasmus Wilson, C. S. Jerram, M.A., Oxon., H. J. Younger, Duncan Macneill, Dr J. M. Crombie, Colonel Morrison, &c.

The letter of apology from the ex-President of the United States was as follows :—

“17 Cavendish Square, June 6th, 1877.

“Sir,—General Grant desires me to express his thanks for your very kind invitation for him to be present at the Centenary Dinner of the Gaelic Society of London, and the very cordial language in which it is conveyed, and to assure you that it would have given him great satisfaction to avail himself of your courtesy, especially as he is most willing to accept the kinship which you are good enough also to claim; but he has already accepted another invitation to dinner on that day.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

“H. BADEAN,

“Brevet Brigadier-General, Aide-de-Camp in Waiting.

“J. Halley Burton, Esq., Vice-President of the Gaelic Society of London.”

The dinner was served in Mr Grieve's best style.

After the loyal toasts, the CHAIRMAN gave “The Army, the Navy, and the Reserve Forces.” He was glad to see that Scotsmen stuck well to the Volunteer movement, and they deserved the greatest credit for so doing. (Applause.) He coupled the toast with the names of Surgeon-General Mackinnon, C.B., and Captain Jay.

Deputy-Surgeon-General W. A. MACKINNON, C.B., who was most enthusiastically received, responded for the Army, and said—My Lord and gentlemen, the toast of the Army is one so universally well received in all assemblages of our countrymen—(cheers)—that there is little more for me to say, than to thank you for the honour you have done the service; and I can assure you that the army greatly appreciates the good opinion of its fellow citizens. (Cheers.) As a Highlander, I cannot refrain on this occasion from carrying my thoughts back to the first half of the century, the close of which we are now celebrating, and all of us might look with pride and satisfaction on what the Highlanders did for the army during that period—(applause)—and when we recall the great number of officers and men that the Gaelic speaking inhabitants of Scotland sent forth to fight the battles of the country, we cannot but feel proud of our native land. (Cheers.) Referring to the Isle of Skye,—(cheers)—to which I have the honour to belong, I may mention that 1,600 private soldiers from that Island fought at Waterloo, besides many officers. I could go into greater detail on this subject, but merely give you this as an instance of the military spirit which prevailed at the period referred to in this small spot of the Highlands. (Applause.) It has been computed by a competent authority that during the period of the wars with America and France, in the latter end of the past and beginning of the present centuries, the Isle of Skye produced 10,000 foot soldiers, 600 commissioned officers, under the rank of colonel, 48 lieutenant-colonels, 21 lieutenant-generals and major-generals, 4 governors of British colonies, 1 governor-general, and 1 adjutant. But, sir, our feeling of pride is mixed with one of regret that now so few men can be obtained for Her Majesty's service in the Highlands—but the men are not there.

Go to many of the straths and glens, which in those days contained a happy and loyal peasantry, and you will find lots of the antlered monarchs of the glen, but very few of the killed men which were at one time the pride and glory of our Highland chiefs. The systematic and cruel depopulation that was at one time so rife is the cause of this. I do not mean to blame any of the present generation for those proceedings, as I feel sure that the present race of Highland proprietors regret the depopulation of the glens more than I can express, and that a repetition of it in this our day would not, for an instant, be tolerated. (Renewed cheers.) But although many of the Highlanders are now flourishing in other countries, and have made their homes in other and distant lands, they still retain their ancient national renown—(cheers)—as was not long ago exemplified in the greatest war of modern times, viz., the late American war, where both in the North and South they had Highland regiments which performed excellent service. (Cheers.) A few days ago I met an old brother officer, who had been adjutant-general with General Beauregard of the Confederate army, and he told me that the finest body of men he ever saw was a regiment from Virginia, entirely composed of Highlanders—Macs of all clans, all speaking the Gaelic language; and the words of command and drill were given in that language. I should like to say a great deal more on this subject, but must conclude by again thanking you heartily in the name of the army for the reception you have given to the toast. (Great cheering, amidst which this distinguished and patriotic Highlander resumed his seat.)

Captain JAY replied for the Reserve Forces in suitable terms.

Mr J. F. CAMPBELL of Islay next gave "The Legislature," to which Mr FRASER-MACKINTOSH, M.P., replied.

The CHAIRMAN then proposed the toast of the evening, "The Gaelic Society." He felt it was a great honour to stand in the position in which he did, for some of his "forebears" had been connected with the Society. (Applause.) The Gaelic Society (the Chairman continued) was formed in 1777. There was no special object contemplated by its founders beyond mere social advantages, the majority of its members being but birds of passage on their way to join the British army serving in the American war. As, however, some of them had subsequently become residents in the English capital, the Society was thereby strengthened in numbers and influence. That position enabled it to advocate from time to time matters of importance to the Highlands. (Cheers.) At this period, the natives of that portion of the country were precluded by an Act of Parliament from wearing tartan in any article of dress. The members of the Gaelic Society, in conjunction with their countrymen of the Highland Society, decided on taking steps for the repeal of this obnoxious Act, which they succeeded in accomplishing in 1782, when the Disarming Act, so called, was removed from the Statute Book. (Applause.) The Society being then composed exclusively of Highlanders, and Gaelic being the language of all classes—chiefs as well as vassals—the preservation and cultivation of its literature, music, and poetry, became prominent features of the Society, and continues to be so to the present day. In pursuit of these objects, and to provide for the spiritual wants of the many Highland soldiers then in the army and stationed in London, or passing through, a sum of £4000 was collected as a "Gaelic Chapel Fund," by which means Divine services were, with few interruptions, conducted from 1810 till 1844, when, in consequence of the disruption in the Church of Scotland and other causes, the services ceased, and the fund was transferred to the use of the Caledonian Asylum. The Society having thus provided for their countrymen in London, directed their attention to the improvement of the means of educating clergymen, intended as pastors in Highland parishes, by the establishment of a chair for Celtic literature in one of the Scottish Universities. (Applause.) The Society's attempts in this matter were begun in 1836, ably supported by Lord Aboyne, Chief of the Society, Sir John Sinclair, Sir George Murray, Campbell of Islay. W. A. Mackinnon, C.B., and others; but it was not till 1869, when the question was taken up by the more powerful Council of the University of Edinburgh, that,

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in the hands of the indomitable Professor Blackie, any real progress was made; and now, to the great glory and praise of that gentleman, the work is nearly accomplished. (Loud cheers.) Although the Society was thus directing its attention to the spiritual and educational wants of the people it represents, it was ever ready to give, so far as it was able, material help in times of need. When the total failure of the potato crop in 1847 resulted almost in a famine in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the Society responded to their suffering kindred by sending £500 to their help. (Applause.) The subject of teaching the youth of the Highlands through the medium of their mother tongue—the Gaelic—received the attention of the Society in 1870, when a deputation waited on the Lord Advocate to urge the adoption of a clause to this effect in the Act; but, as yet, nothing has been done towards meeting their requirements. As, however, the subject had now received the support and advocacy of Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, M.P. for the Inverness Burghs, the just demand of the Highland people could not much longer be refused. (Cheers.) The last work that occupied the attention of the Society was the compilation of some ancient melodies of the Highlands. These relics of the past were arranged with modern accompaniments, and, judging by the reception already accorded to them, are destined to become great favourites, not only among those connected with the Highlands, but among those who have no national sympathy with the airs or sentiments of the songs. (Applause.) Till within the past fifteen years the Gaelic Society of London was the only society of the kind in existence; now, incited by its example, there are few towns of importance in Scotland without a Gaelic Society. Moreover, the Celtic Choir of London was founded last year, under the presidency of Lord Macduff, to practice the singing of Highland songs; and these songs were very favourably received at the recent concert given by the Society. (The Chairman resumed his seat amid loud applause.)

Song: "The Dowerless Lass." *Ged tha mi gun Chrodh gun Aidhean.* Miss Clara Leslie.

Mr CAMERON MACPHEE at this stage stood up, and addressing his Lordship, said—Will you permit me to claim the company's attention for an instant, while I state that the oldest member of the Gaelic Society—Mr Colin Maccallum—is obliged to leave, his residence being some distance in the country. He is desirous of saying a few words on the present occasion, not being likely to be present at the bi-centenary. (Cheers and laughter.)

Mr MACCALLUM, who was greeted with great applause, said—Marquis of Huntly and Gentlemen, I am very much obliged to you for acceding to the appeal to allow me to express my gratification at being present here this evening to witness this cordial gathering to do honour to my ancient friend, the Gaelic Society. (Loud cheers.) My friend, Mr MacPhee, looks upon me as a natural curiosity, and it may be so, as I am now upwards of forty-five years a member of the Society—(great applause)—and although, as he prophesies truly, I am not likely to see its second centenary, yet I am thankful to have lived to see what I have seen, and hope that the rising generation of Highlanders will remember Ossian's injunction, "*Lean gu dlu ri clui do shìnnair.*" My Lord and Gentlemen, again I thank you for this privilege, and bid you all good night. (Prolonged applause, amidst which Mr Maccallum left the meeting.)

Song: "The Melody of Love"—*Ealaidh Gaoil.* J. C. Macnab.

Mr CHARLES FRASER-MACKINTOSH, M.P., in rising to propose the "Toast of the Visitors," said—I must at the outset state how glad I feel at being present on this interesting occasion. Your noble Chairman, in his speech, has touched on many points in the history of the Society, whose Centenary we now celebrate. He mentioned that it was first started as a bond of union amongst the officers from the north, who had been engaged in the American War of Independence. It is a circumstance within my own knowledge, that from my own county of Inverness alone, there were scores of officers and hundreds of men. It is not a little interesting, that now we are celebrating our Centenary, we happen to have among our guests, the son of ex-President Grant. The President's letter, just read, acknowledging the kindly ties of kinship with the old country was, as it ought to be, most warmly received. (Applause.) Our country has made great progress since 1777, and so has America. I am sure there is none here who does not wish well to the United States, or that they should be other than our friends. (Cheers.) There are many of our countrymen in the States who are as enthusiastic and clannish as we could

wish. This Society has done good work in its day, else it would never have existed. Its members are active, hearty, and sympathetic with all that Highlanders delight in. (Cheers. Our noble Chairman is no Highlander carrying his sympathy in his sleeve, but has about him the true ring. (Great applause.) I hope that our young friend, Mr Jesse Grant, who is to respond to this toast, and who will open his mouth in public in this country for the first time to-night, will be pleased with his reception and the manner we Highlanders conduct our festivities, and I do hope that he will carry back with him to his own land, the same kindly feelings to us and our country that we do to him and his. (Prolonged cheers.) There are other visitors to whom I would wish to refer, but the evening progresses, and I must conclude: the health of our Visitors, coupled with the name of Mr Jesse Grant. (Loud and repeated cheers.)

Song: "The Star Spangled Banner."

Mr JESSE GRANT, who was very heartily greeted, replied and expressed his great pleasure at being present at such an enthusiastic Highland gathering. There always had been a friendly feeling between his countrymen and the Scots, but it was peculiarly so in his case and that of his family, for they were proud of their connection with Scotland, bearing as they did a Highland name. (Cheers.) His father, in the letter read, had already acknowledged the kinship with pleasure, and they were all proud of their Highland origin. (Great applause.) His father would have been with them that evening had he not made another engagement before receiving the Society's invitation, but he did the next best thing he could, he sent his son to represent him. (Cheers.) He was not a speaker, and for the reception he was everywhere receiving, he "had to thank his lucky stars that he was the son of his own father." (Cheers and laughter.)

Mr SHANNON STEVENSON proposed "The health of the Noble Chairman, the Marquis of Huntly," and passed a high and well-deserved eulogium on his Lordship for the active part he had always taken in everything calculated to benefit his countrymen, and especially for the interest he had invariably taken as Chief of the Gaelic Society. The toast was received with great enthusiasm.

The Noble MARQUIS, in reply, expressed the pleasure he had on all occasions derived from his connection with the Society. (Cheers.) He felt sure that he was doing the right thing when he followed the example of his late father, who was at once the Patron and a pupil of the Society. (Loud cheers.) While he admitted the benefits conferred upon the Highlands, in one way, by the introduction of sport—for his own part, he much preferred the sight and proximity of stalwart men and women. (Cheers.) These should be the glory and the pride of a Highland chief. (Great applause.) When he was left a minor under charge of trustees, he was always taught to live in the South, as the Highlands were only considered good to draw rents from, and to visit for a few weeks in the summer time. When he became of age, and could act for himself, he thought and acted differently,—(cheers)—and spent a great part of his time on his property among his people. (Great applause.) It would always afford him the greatest pleasure to be of service to the Society. (Continued cheers.)

Song: "The Black-haired Laddie"—*An Gille Dubh Ciar Dhubb*. Miss Helen D'Alton.

Dr CHARLES MACKAY, in rising to propose the toast of "Kindred Societies," said—The subject is a wide one, and may be said to extend over all the civilized portions of the globe. It is not only in London, in Manchester, in Liverpool, that there are Celtic or Gaelic societies—not only in English, and, as was to be expected, in Scottish cities and towns—in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Greenock, Inverness, and in beautiful little Oban and other places, that Scotsmen, whether of Lowland or of Highland origin unite in brotherhood to keep up the national spirit, and encourage one another to speak the venerable language of the Gael—the oldest language now spoken in the world, except perhaps the Chinese and the Hindostani. The Irish—a kindred people—if not originally the same as the Highlanders, were equally enthusiastic with respect to the old speech, and there had recently been established in Dublin a society, to which he had the honour to belong—(hear, hear)—to cultivate the Irish Gaelic. (Cheers.) And not merely in the British Isles was this movement in progress. In all the great cities of the United States in the Dominion of Canada, in the flourishing South African Colonies, in Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon, and wherever Highlanders were to be found in search of fame and fortune; and where on the face of the earth were they *not* to be found?—(loud cheers)—there was sure to be a Highland or Gaelic Society. (Renewed cheers.) In fact there was more of Scotland out of it than in it; the more was the pity, as Great Britain might some day find to her cost if she were sorely pressed for soldiers to maintain her place in the forefront of the world. But Scotsmen—many of them self-banished, and many more banished against their will by the cruel policy of Highland proprietors half of whom were Englishmen, and not one-fourth of them able to understand a word in the noble language of their ancestors—never lost their love for the land of their birth, but loved it all the more fondly when far away from it—(cheers)—some of them perhaps cherishing

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nothing of
the sort

the thought that if fortune favoured them in the New World, they might return in the afternoon of their days to their old home to spend the evening of their useful lives, and purchase a few acres, or a few hundred or thousand of acres in Scotland. (Loud cheers.) It was among such men as these that Gaelic societies flourished. To some parts of what were called the Townships in Ontario, Canada, there were more Gaelic spoken than English—the warlike tones of the pipes were heard at every social gathering—(cheers)—the trades of the shopkeepers and merchants were painted in Gaelic over the doors—an example which the Highlanders at home would do well to imitate,—and what was more to the point, one if not two newspapers wholly printed in Gaelic, had been successfully established—(loud cheers)—which was not yet the case in the Highlands, though, he hoped, it soon would be. (Renewed cheering.) Englishmen, in criticising what had been called the “Celtic revival,” were fond of asking of what use it was to perpetuate a decaying language in which to carry on the world’s business. No doubt it was, but Gaelic, though perishing, would not be allowed to die any more than Greek or Latin. (Loud cheers.) These languages, though no longer spoken, still remained for the delight of scholars, as Gaelic would do, that copious and musical speech, on which the Greek and Latin were partially built up—(cheers)—and which had contributed largely to the French, the Spanish, the Italian, and notably to the English and Lowland Scotch, though such ignorant makers of Dictionaries had failed to discover the fact, or contemptuously refused to investigate it. (Loud cheers.) In proposing the toast entrusted to him, he would couple it with the name of his friend, Mr Macrae Moir, now present, so long and so favourably known in connection with the Highland Society, and the Scottish Hospital in Crane Court—(cheers)—not forgetting another friend unhappily absent, Professor Blackie (cheers), who had all but unaided raised £10,000 for the establishment of the Celtic Chair at Edinburgh (loud cheers), and who would assuredly, if his brilliant and useful life were spared long enough, add a few more thousands to that handsome but not sufficient sum. (Loud applause.)

Solo pianoforte: “Echoes of Caledonia.” Louis Honig.

Mr MACRAE MOIR, in reply to the toast of the “Kindred Societies,” said—My Lord Marquis and Gentlemen, on behalf of the widowed mother with her fatherless child on her knee, whose “tooties” she is endeavouring to keep warm until he is old enough to be admitted into the Caledonian Asylum, I thank you. On behalf of the aged, infirm, and care-worn, whose latter days are made sunny, love of life preserved, and genial recollections of kith and kin and fatherland are magnified and glorified by the generous support cheerfully given by the Scottish Corporation—(cheers)—I also thank you. On behalf of the Caledonian Society, which so warmly supports everything Scottish in London by its sedate conviviality and bounteous liberality, I am allowed by my friend on my right, Mr Anderson Souttar, the honorary secretary of that Society, to thank you. On behalf, likewise, of the Highland Society of London—(applause)—whose funds are devoted to the maintenance of manly sports, the cultivation of those thrilling notes which Highlanders only can fully appreciate,—(cheers)—the establishment of Gaelic bursaries,—(cheers)—and the support of Scottish charities, it is my privilege heartily to thank you. On behalf of each and all of the many kindred societies established in London and elsewhere, I hope I may, without presumption, be allowed on this occasion to express most grateful thanks. The Chief of this Society, your Noble Chairman, has, by his words and deeds, made for himself a position of which any Scottish nobleman may be proud, and one worthy of the rightful heir to the Dukedom of Gordon. (Loud and repeated cheers.)

Surgeon-General W. A. MACKINNON, C.B., proposed the health of John F. Campbell of Islay, and said—My Lord and Gentlemen, I am desirous to propose the health of a gentleman whose name should not be omitted in the programme of toasts at such a gathering as the present. I have very great pleasure in proposing the health of a most distinguished Highlander, and when I give you the name of John F. Campbell of Islay, —(great applause)—I feel confident that you will receive the toast with that pleasure and enthusiasm which his name must always command among his countrymen. (Cheers, again and again repeated.) We are much indebted to our friend, Professor Blackie,—(cheers)—for what he has done for the Gaelic language, and he has done a great deal;—(cheers)—but, I think, no man living has done more for our native tongue than John F. Campbell of Islay,—(cheers)—and so long as the Gaelic lasts, and wherever, in any part of the world, it may be spoken, the name of *Iain Caimbeul* will be held in love and veneration by all true Highlanders. (Loud applause.) The toast was drank with Highland honours.

Mr CAMPBELL, on rising to respond, was vociferously cheered, again and again repeated. He first acknowledged the compliment paid him by Surgeon-General Mackinnon in sonorous Gaelic, and said that Gaelic was a bond of union between those who spoke it which a non-Gaelic speaking Southron could never understand, after which, in deference to those present who did not understand the more refined Celtic language, he briefly thanked

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Macrae Moir
Gaelic note

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them all in the "vulgar tongue" for the hearty manner in which his name was received by the company. (Cheers.)

Solo piano: "The Huntly Waltzes" (dedicated to the Marchioness of Huntly). Louis Honig.

Mr ROBERT HEPBURN said—My Lord Huntly, Mr Fraser-Mackintosh, and gentlemen, I have just been called upon unexpectedly to propose to you the next toast. I wish it had fallen into abler hands. However, I do so with very great pleasure, especially as it is one which requires but little on my part to ensure it a most hearty and cordial reception—it is the health of the Office-bearers of the Gaelic Society. (Applause.) You may remember in the Heart of Midlothian that the Duke of Argyle said to Jeanie Deans, "It's a cauld heart, Jeanie, that wadna warm at the sicht o' the tartan"; and truly it may be said it is a cauld heart that could look around this Highland gathering and see so many of the office-bearers and members of the Gaelic Society clad in the "garb of the Gael," without feeling proud of the efforts they have made, not only to preserve that garb in which their forefathers bravely fought and gloriously fell, in their long continued and gallant struggles to uphold intact their civil and religious liberty, as well as the honour and independence of their country—(cheers)—but also in conserving the language and poetry of the olden time, and all those nationalities which have made Scotchmen and Scotland pre-eminent amongst the nations of the earth. (Great applause.) The observations made by the noble Marquis of Huntly in reference to the restrictions enforced by Government forbidding the wearing of the kilt at the end of the last century, reminds me of an anecdote which happened some time after the repeal of that obnoxious Act. A royal personage was reviewing a company of Highlanders one cold, raw morning in Windsor Park, and not being in a good temper, he struck the kilt of the front rank man with his cane, saying, at the same time, "I hate these petticoats." The Highlander, stung to the quick at this remark, proudly drew himself up to his full length, and said in a voice loud enough to be heard by his comrades, "Ta Teil may care, we like them oursel." (Laughter and cheers.) Gentlemen, it is a long time to look back through the vista of a hundred years, but depend upon it, if the Gaelic Society had not within itself the elements of what was real and true, it never would have outlived one quarter of the time. (Applause.) Gratitude and thanks are due to the Society for what it has accomplished, and more especially to its office-bearers. I trust they will long live to carry on the noble work of preserving these characteristics and nationalities so dear to the hearts of all loyal and patriotic Scotchmen, and thus be enabled to hand down to posterity the records of a race which never felt fear or knew dishonour. (Loud cheering.) I beg to propose the Office-bearers of the Gaelic Society, coupled with the name of their much respected and esteemed president, Mr Cameron MacPhee. (Continued applause.)

Song: "Colin's Cattle"—*Croth Chailean*. Miss Clara Leslie.

Mr CAMERON MACPHEE—Most Noble Chief and Gentlemen,—As an office-bearer, it is my pleasant duty to offer you the grateful thanks of my colleagues and fellow-members of the Gaelic Society, for the warm manner you have been pleased to receive the toast proposed in such handsome terms by our friend Mr Hepburn. It is gratifying to us to hear that you appreciate our endeavours to maintain intact the existence of the Society as handed down by our predecessors, and the cultivation of its objects, with undiminished interest. (Cheers.) After the address you have just listened to from our Chief, giving a sketch of the proceedings of the Society from the date of its institution, I will not trouble you with any remarks of mine, but beg to repeat our acknowledgements for your sympathy in countenancing with your presence the Centenary; and, while wishing you all long life and happiness, I would express my hope that the celebration of the next Centenary will be presided over by a Marquis of Huntly. (Great cheering.)

Song: "Sad and Weary"—*Gur Trom Trom a tha Mi*.

A number of other toasts followed, and the evening was spent in a very agreeable manner. The musical portion of the Centenary was one of its marked features. The artists were—Miss Helen D'Alton, Miss Clara Leslie, Mr J. C. Macnab, Mr J. T. Heddlie; Solo Pianist and Conductor, Herr Louis Honig. It is almost needless to state that Mr Honig did his duty well, and that Mr John Mackenzie, piper to the Royal Caledonian Asylum played with his accustomed ability. "*Auld Lang Syne*" was sung by the whole company, after which several reels were danced in the hall.

We heartily sympathise with the Editor of the *London Scottish Journal* in his expressed wish to be present at the next Centenary of the Gaelic Society of London.

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L I T E R A T U R E.

ORAIN AGUS FUINN GHAIÐHEALACH: *Popular Gaelic Melodies, with Gaelic and English Words (Sol-Fa Notation). Edited by W. S. RODDIE and L. MACBEAN. Edinburgh: MacLachlan & Stewart. Glasgow: W. Love.*

MUCH attention has been of late devoted to the preservation of the melodies of the Highlands, and we welcome this unpretending little work as the most successful attempt as yet made in that direction. It contains twenty-eight popular Gaelic songs, with English translations; and, on the whole, the airs given are those best known throughout the Highlands. The work has one great recommendation in our estimation—with a few exceptions, and these exceptions are decided blemishes—we have the airs in their native and primitive simplicity. The exceptions are—in “Fear a Bhata” and “Ealaidh Ghaoil” we have too many slurs; “Bruthaichean Ghlinn Braon” is slightly touched up and improved the wrong way. We have a most decided antipathy to all translations of poetry, for we are firmly convinced that no translation, however able and faithful, can do justice to the original. A good translation requires a thorough knowledge of both languages; and, to be of equal merit with the original, the translator must needs be possessed of equal poetic genius with the original composer. Aye, more, for he is trammelled by a necessary adherence to an original which was composed without any such clipping of the poet’s flights of imagination. The versions in this *brochure* have, however, softened down our dislikes considerably, for those by L. Macbean and H. Whyte are out of sight the best renderings we have yet seen, excepting a few of Professor Blackie’s, and Sheriff Nicolson’s translation of Macdonald’s *Birlinn*. Even the Professor’s efforts are sometimes quite as much original compositions as translations.

We find one or two unhappy renderings of the titles of the songs, such as “The AUBURN Maid,” for “*An Ribhinn Donn*.” This is neither pretty, poetical, nor correct. “The BROWN Haired Maid,” would be all three. “We will up and March away” is not so good a rendering of “*Gabhaidh Sinn AN RATHAD MOR*,” as “We will take the King’s Highway.”

We have no patience with those who have the presumption to improve (?) our Highland melodies. Improve the primrose into a rose! It is just as easy and as wise to attempt the one as the other. Both would suffer and die. Captain Fraser of Knockie, when preparing his *Melodies* for publication, submitted a few specimens to John Thomson, of the *Musical Miscellany*, Edinburgh, who replied, in a letter, hitherto unpublished, as follows:—“Having carefully examined the airs you have sent me, I must frankly confess that they have ‘disappointed me, with one or two exceptions. They are almost all too florid—they are not at all characteristic—i.e., they have not the peculiar Highland accent which would stamp them as real national Highland airs. It is one thing to have melodies composed by a Highlander, and quite another to have Highland melodies, for in the former case the airs may have no distinctive features at all, while in the other the distinctive feature is absolutely

necessary. My own compositions are not necessarily Scotch because I am a Scotchman, and so of the Highland melodies you sent me. . . . In calling the first two classes good, I do not mean to imply that they are by any means what I expected in Highland melodies. Those which I have heard Mrs Macleod of Macleod, senior, sing were wild and plaintive in a remarkable degree, totally unlike other music. They were sung with Gaelic words, and the effect was striking. Such are the kind of melodies I had in my mind when I expressed myself to you so warmly in admiration of them. The accompaniments, I am sorry to say, will not do; besides being too incorrect for publication, they want character, and are greatly overloaded with notes. Should this, however, not appear to you and to your friends a sufficiently strong objection to their retention, I must be relieved from all responsibility of superintendence which could for a moment imply my sanction."

A careful perusal of this extract might prove of real service to those engaged in the preservation of our national melodies. We want them as they really are—not as some admirers of German, Italian, French, or English melodies would wish to have them. We would not exchange the characteristics of our heather even for those of the lily or the rose; and it is because the "Popular Gaelic Melodies" are so redolent of the soil, and preserve, on the whole, the original simplicity of the airs, that we heartily commend them to all lovers of our Highland muse. The songs selected are all popular and well known, and many of the airs are extremely simple, beautiful, and sweet.

NOTE.—This month we have given eight pages more than usual, to enable us to place before our readers the only *full* report given, by any publication, of the CENTENARY CELEBRATION of the Gaelic Society of London; and, at the same time, avoid any curtailment of the space almost invariably devoted to the literary purposes of the *Magazine*.

MONUMENT TO JOHN MACKENZIE, OF THE "BEAUTIES OF GAELIC POETRY."
—Alex. Fraser, Esq., Drummond Estate Office, Inverness, Treasurer, acknowledges *receipt* of the following additional subscriptions:—A. Macdonald Jeffrey, Esq. (born at Inverewe), 8 Station Terrace, Camberwell, London, £1 1s; A. C. Mackenzie, teacher, Maryburgh, 5s; A. Morrison, spirit merchant, Ullapool, for self and friends, 15s:

The following have been *intimated* to the Honorary Secretary, Alex. Mackenzie, Editor of the *Celtic Magazine*, since our last issue:—Kenneth Mackenzie, Aird, Ullapool, 5s; Simon Mackenzie, Inverbain, Applecross, 10s; John Mackenzie, Boor, Poolewe, 2s 6d; James Mackenzie, Poolewe, 2s 6d; Kenneth Mackenzie, do., 1s; Kenneth Maclean, do., 2s 6d; Alex. Mackenzie, do., 1s; James Mackintosh, do., 2s 6d; Hector Maciver, do., 2s; Donald Grant, do., 2s; Kenneth Mackenzie, do., 1s; Alex. Macrae, Kernsary, 2s; Alex. Mackenzie, Coast, 1s.

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